

MEDIA SKILLS TRAINING FOR MILITARY POLICE

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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B.S., U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York, 1982

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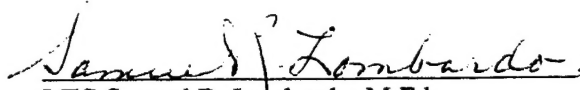
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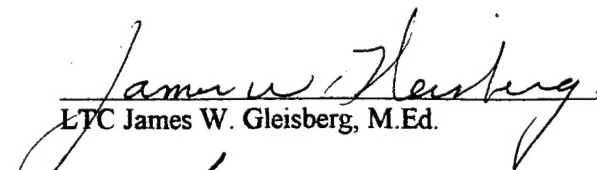
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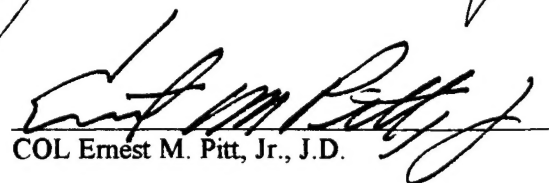
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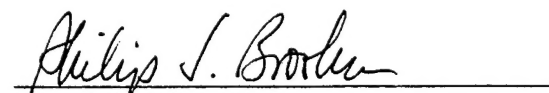
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ABSTRACT

MEDIA SKILLS TRAINING FOR MILITARY POLICE JUNIOR LEADERS by MAJ

MaryAnn B. Cummings, USA, 91 pages.

This study investigates the current proficiency of media skills required for Military Police junior leaders to perform missions in any environment. Currently, junior noncommissioned and company grade officer professional development courses do not teach media skills. The concept presented states that news media will be present in locations where military police junior leaders conduct operations. Consequently, leaders must be trained to deal with the media while successfully accomplishing assigned missions.

Military police soldiers routinely are involved in crisis situations, whether in garrison or on deployment. Crisis situations attract news media, and military police are frequently the first line of contact. As US government representatives, military officials must cooperate with the press and provide information in accordance with Defense Department instructions. To do so without compromising operations security requires particular skills in dealing with media.

This study examines junior leaders' actions with news media during deployment and garrison operations. Using input from various commanders, provost marshals, and public affairs officers, this study identifies areas of media skills training needed and concludes that Military Police junior leaders must receive this training. The study recommends media skills instruction in the noncommissioned, warrant, and commissioned officer professional development courses.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Thesis Topic

Are Military Police junior leaders trained sufficiently in media skills to perform their full range of combat support operations?

Background

In today's power projection Army, military police respond to a myriad of situations and potential conflicts, in peacetime and wartime, and during stability and support operations. Because of their security role and employment as dispersed three-person teams, military police are likely to encounter members of the media. Given the latest technology, news organizations are able to instantaneously transmit information to the American public from even the most remote locations. With this capability, any local incident can quickly assume national or international status. Consequently, military police junior leaders must be adequately trained to deal with the legal and moral issues involving the press on the future battlefield.

To research this question adequately of whether military police junior leaders are sufficiently trained in media skills to complete assigned missions successfully, a review of the military's past procedures for accommodating the press was essential. This historical examination aided in several ways: to understand the nature of the press, to be familiar with what members of the media encountered in previous military operations, and to recognize potential actions of press representatives as they accomplished their mission to inform the American public.

The history of American military engagements revealed a dynamic relationship between the US military and the American media.¹ Existing since the earliest years of the military, this relationship evolved with each military operation. The rapid adoption of the telegraph system in the 1850s altered a mutually supporting coexistence between the military and the press. The telegraph allowed communications to travel across the country and describe on-going events, including military operations.

At the onset of the Civil War, the federal government and the US Army recognized the new capability of American reporters to transmit war correspondence. Previously, journalists traveled with the army into battle and filed their reports after its conclusion. Not possessing an independent capability to transmit stories, they relied on military communications systems. Using the telegraph, reporters sent information about the continuing war effort while it was fresh. For the first time, reporters posed a significant threat to the operations security of the Union war effort. Data about troop units, strengths, locations, movements, and proposed operations were potential news items. Recognizing this new obstacle to protecting their forces, the government immediately requested voluntary censorship. It neglected, however, to give specific guidance on the type of information to be censored. Therefore, the voluntary program failed.

The next option for the government was to impose severe censorship practices and significant penalties for those who did not comply. By today's standards, these measures would not withstand legal challenges by the media. In the days of the Civil War, however, the Lincoln administration, with the support of Congress, exercised unusual control. In an unsuccessful attempt to prevent release of strategic military information, President Lincoln gave the military the unprecedented authority to control telegraph lines and censor the press.² Reporters and newspaper publishers also risked fines, suspension of publication privileges, and imprisonment if they printed information of some value to the Confederate cause. The prohibition also included criticism of the

Lincoln administration and its policies. This latter restriction seems to oppose the intent of the first amendment directly, as Congress supported the Lincoln administration's policies. Undoubtedly, it limited the ability of the press to report independently on elected officials and government actions.

The federal government also recognized the tremendous influence of reporters' stories on American citizens. For this reason, the government closely scrutinized and limited media accounts of military operations as well as criticism of elected government officials. This influence of the media on American citizens not only continues to exist today, but affects military operations to a greater extent as well. Recently, Marvin Covault, a retired US Army Lieutenant General, described the concept of "mission creep" during a television interview. Speaking of the conflict in Bosnia, he explained that live television coverage of human suffering within that region affects our people, causing our civilian leaders to turn to the military who they know has the capability to accomplish the additional mission of housing and feeding the refugees.³

Advances in communications technology increased the problems of information security during the Spanish-American War in 1898. Federal government officials again believed unauthorized release of crucial wartime information damaged military campaigning. Consequently, the federal government imposed restrictions on news organizations in greater magnitude than during the Civil War. Employing censorship units for the first time, the government detailed the Navy to supervise elements located at cable offices in Florida; the District of Columbia; and New York.⁴

In the 1914 and 1916 military conflicts in Mexico, the federal government's handling of the media differed by service. While the Navy practiced censorship at the port of Veracruz, the Army chose to avoid press limits. Government officials explained the difference in press rules was due to the mission being labeled "at most a police function in a country where the indigenous authorities were unable to carry out that task."⁵

During World War I, the government again recognized the influence of news organizations on the American people by immediately imposing censorship in April, 1917. It established the "Committee on Public Information, the nation's first formal propaganda and censorship agency."⁶ In addition to this committee, Congress passed the Espionage Act of 1917 prohibiting the "publication of any information that could even remotely be considered to offer aid to the enemy, as well as interfere with American military operations or war production."⁷ Congress also passed the Sedition Act which added significant restrictions to the press. This legislation also gave government officials overwhelming latitude to prevent publication of sensitive information. Specifically, the Act "forbade any criticism of the conduct or actions of the US government or its military forces, including disparaging remarks about the flag, military uniforms, similar badges or symbols."⁸ Using that legislation, government leaders eliminated selected publications from the mails; successfully prosecuted some journalists, editors, and publishers; and "thereby induced many others to accept censorship without resistance."⁹ Immediately following this experience, news organizations challenged the legality of the government's severe limitations on their actions.

The World War II experience reflected the administration's realization that measures employed during World War I would not be prudent given previous questions as to their legality. Applying some restrictions on the media, the government used them gradually and sooner than during World War I, almost one year prior to America's entry into the war. While Roosevelt and his advisors requested voluntary compliance from news organizations, they also planned for press censorship.

When the United States entered the war in 1941, Roosevelt directed the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to organize news censorship and manage telecommunications traffic into and out of the United States.¹⁰ The subsequent War Powers Act of 1941 created the Office of Censorship which, "in cooperation with the media, prepared a set of guidelines for domestic news

organizations that the government asked them to observe voluntarily.”¹¹ These guidelines, the “Code of Wartime Practices,” were similar to previous wartime restraints, except for Espionage and Sedition Acts’ penalties.

Federally imposed press restrictions were not the media’s only limits. Military commanders in the theater of operations ordered security reviews of press reports throughout the duration of the war. In the Pacific combat zones, reporters confronted the challenges of traveling on Navy vessels and transmitting their accounts of military operations. Their location aboard ship offered Navy officials an easier opportunity to supervise and censor material prior to publication. Despite this limit, a Chicago Tribune correspondent disclosed information the Navy gained while breaking Japan’s naval codes. Essentially, he identified the Japanese ships involved in the battle of Midway. Fortunately, this listing did not alert the Japanese to this US capability. Although the correspondent appeared before a grand jury, they chose not to indict him.¹²

In the Pacific theater of operations, military leaders required journalists’ work to undergo multiple reviews prior to releasing information for publication. General MacArthur also “pressured journalists to produce stories that burnished the image of the troops and their supreme commander.”¹³ The Navy altered the release time of news accounts to provide “good news” along with the “bad.”¹⁴

In North Africa and Western Europe, US military leaders joined British officials to develop a less restrictive censorship program. Army officers acted as censors and together with accredited journalists accompanied units into the initial assault waves in North Africa and Normandy. In an official memo, Operational Memorandum Number 27, the media policy called for the government to provide the maximum amount of information consistent with security. Despite the stated press policy, complaints arose about requirements for multiple copies of stories

to both public affairs officers and censorship teams. The increased volume caused delays, which, at times, allowed the official "military press releases [to] scoop the correspondents."¹⁵

In the Korean War, military plans for censorship and control of media access to military operations were far less organized. Over 300 print, radio, and newsreel correspondents operated under voluntary censorship rules for the first six months of the war. "Due to the changing battlefield fortunes of the United States and its allies,"¹⁶ the government resorted to tougher, compulsory restraints. Originally, while American units experienced success, reporters enjoyed free access and few rules. As the American units suffered setbacks, press restrictions increased. Military leaders viewed the additional limits as critical to maintaining troop morale and safeguarding correspondents from the unpredictability of the conflict. Reporters attributed the policy to attempts to eliminate bad news. Journalists submitted all news reports and film directly to censorship authorities in Korea rather than transmitting them to Tokyo. Still concerned about the release of essential information, military leaders again added a layer of censorship using the US military headquarters in Tokyo.

The end of the Korean War saw a new non war year policy affecting the military and media relationship. Defense Department officials published the Field Press Censorship, a joint service manual identifying censorship procedures for future wars.¹⁷ Military planning for media relations continued throughout the period prior to American involvement in Vietnam. Aware that a compulsory censorship plan might not be feasible, military planners abandoned it. According to news organization representatives, "military officials were anxious to have the press pay more attention to the conflict so as to buttress public support for American intervention."¹⁸ Nonetheless, military leaders requested voluntary compliance from media personnel through the 1970s. The Pentagon renamed the program the "Wartime Information Security Program (WISP)," eliminating the term "censorship." Although creating WISP units to oversee media operations, the Army

disbanded them after four years. Defense Department officials advised military leaders in 1981 that "it was unlikely that any element of WISP would be implemented in any contingency."¹⁹ New communications and transportation technology eliminated the military's ability to conduct field censorship.

During the invasion of Grenada in October of 1983, military leaders denied press access to the theater of operations for the first 48 hours. Members of the media labeled the restriction as the Reagan administration's attempt to return to censorship, citing "a sense of dissatisfaction with the results of the voluntary approach used in Vietnam."²⁰ By denying media access, US government officials avoided the conflicts present during the Vietnam War. Consequently, the only information concerning military operations came directly from official sources and not independent reports. After the initial 48 hours, media representatives entered the theater of operations and transmitted news accounts. By this time, however, significant combat operations were over and little fighting remained. Media personnel also noted a precarious ramification of the press ban which "persuaded some members of the media community to accept a return to military censorship in return for access to the war zone in any future conflicts."²¹

As a direct result of the exclusion of news media from Grenada, General John W. Vessey, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, directed a review of military support to media operations during wartime. He commissioned the "Sidle Panel" which consisted of military personnel and former members of news media organizations. Although he invited news and media associations to participate, "they declined to do so, saying that for media members to serve on a government panel would be inappropriate."²²

After studying surveys from news organizations and hearing testimony on both sides of the issue, the Sidle Panel advocated a number of reforms for the military with the intention of providing for "news media coverage of US military operations to the maximum degree possible

consistent with mission security and the safety of US forces.”²³ Acknowledging limits in military logistics to supporting large numbers of civilian personnel, the panel recommended using “media pools.” These representative samplings of journalists would support all news organizations with written and video products. The panel also endorsed the concept of voluntary compliance by correspondents with military-established “ground rules.” Reporters failing to comply would depart the war zone. These two recommendations would be tested in Panama and the Persian Gulf.

In Panama, news organization representatives participated in media pools; however, military planners failed to permit adequate access to the initial phases of the operation. The conflict was too short in duration to validate Sidle Panel recommendations.

During Operation Desert Storm, military leaders employed media pools to accommodate news organizations. However, military units experienced limits in the number of journalists they could transport. Representatives of these news organizations described barriers to effective reporting of combat operations. John Fialka’s book Hotel Warriors identified deficiencies in transportation, equipment, and access to units. He also suggests a lack of accommodation by Army public affairs officers and an attempt to exercise unnecessary control over news reporters. Fialka described public affairs personnel as a hindrance to the civilian news media.

The experience of Cable News Network (CNN), the television network providing widespread and almost continuous news coverage throughout Operation Desert Storm, afforded an alternate view of media participation. CNN’s ability to broadcast without direct support from military organizations and to emplace correspondents strategically within the theater of operations, created an independent source of news.

The viewing of CNN by all parties involved in the conflict created unusual situations and questioned whether journalists are reporting or making news. In CNN: War in the Gulf: From the Invasion of Kuwait To the Day of Victory and Beyond, the Israeli deputy foreign minister

commented during an interview about television influence with key decisionmakers. While participating on "Larry King Live" and receiving calls from the show's worldwide audience, Benjamin Netanyahu understood that key leaders in Moscow, Washington, London, Riyadh, and Iraq listened to his comments. He mentioned that watching television news broadcasts consumed the Israeli people, "seeing their part of the war both by living it and watching it on the screen."²⁴ He also observed a danger in this sort of vicarious participation in an event via television:

Well, we now have the Heisenberg physics of politics. As you observe a phenomenon with television, instantly you modify it somewhat. And I think that what we have to make sure of is that the truth is not modified, and that it's constantly fed to the leaders and to the publics in the democratic countries.²⁵

Another aspect media representatives confront is the possibility of negative public opinion. When reporting unfavorable news accounts or appearing to disrupt military operations, press personnel risk being labeled disloyal to the war effort or more importantly, to the American soldiers. Peter Arnett's book Live From the Battlefield addressed the initial angry civilian response to his newscasts from the Iraqi capital during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Arnett described receiving some reports of negative reaction to his broadcasts from around the world. He also identified some specific comments concerning his telecasts.

I learned that I had been denounced on the floor of the Congress. Representative Lawrence Coughlin of Pennsylvania had charged, "Arnett is the Joseph Goebbels of Saddam Hussein's Hitler-like regime." Tom Johnson had gotten a letter from thirty-four House members who complained that my coverage "gives the demented dictator a propaganda mouthpiece to over one hundred nations." Conservative members of the British Parliament had compared me to turncoats of World War Two. Political cartoonists enjoyed teaming me up with Saddam Hussein as a "video Benedict Arnold."²⁶

Arnett further described subsequent opinions of his work in Baghdad after his focus on the Allied bombing of a shelter.²⁷ "Now, CNN producers told me, mail to the network was beginning to run in my favor, with fewer calling me the voice of Saddam Hussein, and more addressing the need for the public's right to know."²⁸

During Operation Restore Hope, the military operation conducted to provide food for thousands of Somali citizens, the media enjoyed extensive access to the country. Unlike previous military actions, journalists, in large numbers, flew aboard civilian airplanes to reach the area. This action reduced the government's ability to control their access to potential areas of conflict. American citizens witnessed the effect of this invasion of the press during television broadcasts of the Marines' initial assault onto Somali beaches. The presence of the press, with its dominating floodlights and cameras, eliminated the advantages of darkness and essentially negated the effectiveness of the operation.

Throughout the history of the military and media relationship, the objectives of each institution are apparent. Representatives of the American media look to the First Amendment of the US Constitution which created freedom of the press. They interpret this amendment as an acknowledgement by the founding fathers that an independent press is crucial to a democracy, and therefore, basic to the American way of life. According to Harold W. Chase and Craig R. Ducat in Constitutional Interpretation: Cases--Essays--Materials, however, "The overwhelming majority of Justices on the United States Supreme Court have never acceded to the idea that freedom of the press is absolute."²⁹ In the New York Times Co. versus the United States, also known as the Pentagon Papers case, the Supreme Court addressed the importance of the press' role in American society. Speaking for the majority, Justice Black stated,

In the First Amendment the Founding Fathers gave the free press the protection it must have to fulfill its essential role in our democracy. The press was to serve the governed, not the governors. The Government's power to censor the press was abolished so that the press would remain forever free to censure the Government And paramount among the responsibilities of a free press is the duty to prevent any part of the government from deceiving the people and sending them off to distant lands to die of foreign fevers and foreign shot and shell. In my view, far from deserving condemnation for their courageous reporting, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and other newspapers should be commended for serving the purpose that the Founding Fathers saw so clearly.³⁰

Justice Stewart, with Justice White concurring, identified the potential conflict between the members of the media and government officials when he wrote of the Executive Branch's authority to withhold some information for national security reasons.

It is clear to me that it is the constitutional duty of the Executive—as a matter of sovereign prerogative and not as a matter of law as the courts know law—through the promulgation and enforcement of executive regulations, to protect the confidentiality necessary to carry out its responsibilities in the fields of international relations and national defense.³¹

Stewart restrained his comments with the acknowledgement that “the hallmark of a truly effective internal security system would be the maximum possible disclosure, recognizing that secrecy can best be preserved only when credibility is truly maintained.”³² This remark addressed the government's potential abuse of its authority by classifying an unjustified amount of material as not authorized for release due to security reasons. In the final analysis according to the Supreme Court decisions, government leaders may withhold information from the press for valid national defense justifications.

As discussed, government officials evaluated the accommodations to, and support for, the news media after each military operation. Military leaders also planned for the presence of the media during future troop deployments. Given available technology and stated goals of the press, the military can expect to encounter representatives from news organizations at any time and in any location.

To its disadvantage at times, the media cannot operate as a single entity. Its preparation as an institution to deal with military leaders and the military for the future conflicts is limited. Its inherent nature and tie to economic competition complicate formal attempts to consolidate efforts and to challenge significantly legal limits from military leaders in the name of “operations security.”

Just as opinions within the military differ on the amount of access for the media, journalists themselves cannot agree on an appropriate level of restriction. The significant advantage to the military is the decision of the senior person is binding, despite differing opinions. Not having this command structure, news organizations cannot impose restraining rules on all.³³

To understand why friction exists between the media and the military, one must understand the objectives of the respective institutions. Upon initial examination, these objectives appear incapable of coexistence. In the book Battle Lines, Twenty Century Fund's task force studying military-media relations identified a "culture divide" between members of the military and representatives of the media. The task force highlighted the military's "respect for tradition, authority and leadership, [and] obedience [as] an escapable part of military life."³⁴ The task force contrasted this description with journalists' attributes as "more free-wheeling, irreverent, and skeptical of authority." The task force also noted the potential danger of a widening in the culture gap. There is a significant number of young reporters with no "firsthand exposure to combat, let alone to military life."³⁵ This observation, made in 1985, occurred well before the Panama operation and Persian Gulf War.

By their very nature, the military and the media, as institutions require and possess opposing objectives with respect to the flow of information. The military seeks to prevent the release of information which hampers operations effectiveness. The media, on the other hand, favors information release to promote awareness of an issue and to review government actions critically. It must also maintain a steady readership for survival.

Discussing the role of the press during wartime, the task force advocated a strong and independent media as critical to democracy.

It [free press accompanying soldiers into battle] serves as an eye witness; it forges a bond between the citizen and the soldier; and at its best, it strives to avoid manipulation either by officials or by critics of the government through accurate, independent reporting. It also

provides one of the checks and balances that sustains the confidence of the American people in their political system and armed forces.³⁶

Peter Baestrup maintained: "the nation's news organizations should be seen as a kind of fourth branch of government, an autonomous watchdog over other major institutions."³⁷ He explained this role as particularly important after the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal.

The employment of US military forces was an instrument for the federal government to use in foreign policy matters. Consequently, military operations represented a significant concern to the American public and the news media. The images of the Vietnam War on the television screens across America enabled citizens to witness stark scenes of military operations. Never before had Americans received such extensive and timely information concerning an armed conflict. The media's capability to pass information across the globe quickly and sometimes, in great depth, influenced American public opinion.

Among military personnel, there is a strong belief that unfavorable news accounts reduced American support for the Vietnam War. Journalists and news organizations, however, noted that American public opinion changed about the war, and they, as journalists, merely reported it. Limited in their dealings with the media, military leaders hesitated to trust reporters with sensitive information. Operations in Grenada, Panama, and Kuwait displayed an evolution in the way the military deals with the media. Although each operation shaped the military's public affairs policy, and consequently, modified the training of senior service leaders, there is still a hesitancy when balancing operations security and the public's right to know. For example, VII Corps' western movement plans into Iraq during Operation Desert Storm received "one of the highest levels of classification the military uses."³⁸

Such a level of security created friction with the media. Perhaps at no time since the Inchon Landing during the Korean War had it become so essential to cloak from the enemy such a major operational maneuver Unlike Inchon, which was planned and prepared under a news blackout in Japan, the Great Wheel was being planned in Riyadh, which was literally crawling with reporters The CINC's legitimate concern with operational security greatly

limited access to the plan even within his own headquarters. Restrictions on media access to sensitive areas that might jeopardize the plan were even more severe.³⁹

Concerned with providing unfiltered coverage of the war, reporters from national news organizations wanted to avoid the military-imposed structure.

In his book Hotel Warriors John Fialka described his personal dealings with the military public affairs personnel and the use of press pools to accommodate the large number of reporters. Fialka also noted that most journalists remained in hotels in Riyadh and Dhahran, receiving pool reports, watching televised briefings or observing CNN's war coverage. He attributed the journalists' plush accommodations to military attempts to limit exposure to units in the field.

For the 10 percent of us [reporters] who went out to the field, though, we discovered that the military had also found ways to make working conditions there more difficult. We encountered multiple layers of control, at least one of which always seemed to be there. Barriers seemed to raise automatically to blur the reality; buffers were always at the ready to blunt the sharp edges of truth.⁴⁰

Fialka continued to discuss his frustration with the military during the night of the Scud missile attack in a warehouse near Dhahran, close to their hotel. He explained that an Associated Press photographer rushed to the scene of an explosion to report the incident. Despite his perseverance, Scott Applewhite, the Associated Press photographer, failed to gain access. Fialka blamed military police and public affairs officials for losing the opportunity to provide initial pictures to American citizens about the tragedy.

A line of MPs blocked the front of the building The military had spent hours showing US reporters how quickly they can handle casualties. But when he (Mr. Applewhite) came near the real thing--as real as this war got--15 US and Saudi military police officers descended upon him. He was handcuffed, beaten, and had one of his cameras smashed as he stood his ground, insisting he was an accredited US journalist and had every right to be there.⁴¹

Fialka concluded that the military, especially the Army, incorrectly handled the media and wasted significant opportunities to tell its story. Fialka stated, "this was a war where the military

remained in control of most of the evidence and where the Army commanders' paranoid fear of the media helped bury one of the most positive Army stories since World War II."⁴²

As noted, this relationship between the military and the national media is a matter of balance, flexibility, and acknowledgement of the importance of both sides. Leaders, both military and civilian, addressed these issues at the highest levels. Unfortunately, training of junior military leaders is not routine. This lapse in training junior leaders is significant given the media inclination to interview lower ranking personnel as well as senior officials. Practically speaking, media skills have not been consistently incorporated as essential training tasks for soldiers or their immediate leaders.

For Military Police soldiers and leaders, this problem is more crucial because of their duties, authority, and potential for deployment to areas in conflict. As the police within the military establishment, these soldiers and leaders have law enforcement duties similar to their civilian counterparts. Their duties include the authority to detain individuals within their jurisdiction who negatively impinge on the good order and discipline of the military installation. Unfortunately, with that responsibility comes the potential to abuse it.

Civilian law enforcement officers experience the same problem. In recent years, civilian police organizations made national headlines due to officers' inappropriate behavior. As a result, the American public closely examined the tactics and techniques of all law enforcement personnel. Police training academies considered the effect of the press and focused training, accordingly. One of the most famous incidents involved a motorist in Los Angeles (LA), Rodney King. While trying to arrest King, LA police officers used considerable force. Nearby, a citizen videotaped the police assault on King. Television broadcasts of the beating caused extraordinary nationwide interest in the incident. After reviewing the videotape, police officials determined the officers used excessive force and initiated criminal charges against some of those involved. Their subsequent acquittal of

criminal offenses resulted in extensive rioting within sections of L.A. Many organizations underestimated the media's access to these incidents and the effect of national broadcasts. For certain, these particular police officers misjudged the consequences.

Assumptions

Several assumptions within this discussion are critical to sustain a focused evaluation of the topic. Specifically, American media consists of a vast and diversified institution which does not have a single voice or individual opinion. Rather, representatives of the media encompass many differing political views, economic situations, and educational backgrounds. To review this topic adequately, however, the media will be generally identified as a single entity possessing some specific common goals, objectives, and practices. Members of the US military are also a varied group possessing diverse backgrounds, educational levels, experience bases. As a group, they also are assumed to possess some common goals, objectives, and practices.

Definitions

The media are representatives for print publications and broadcast organizations, both television and radio. The term "media" includes members of American and international news organizations.

Military police are soldiers within the US Army entrusted with specific police authority. They train for law enforcement, security, battlefield circulation control, and enemy prisoner of war operations. Junior leaders within the Military Police Corps are sergeants, staff sergeants, lieutenants, and captains, who perform supervisory duties in MP organizations. These personnel constitute the first levels of leadership within the organizations. Noncommissioned officers generally have between four to ten years of military experience; officers have one to seven years of military experience. The first level of noncommissioned officers, sergeants, normally supervise

three to five soldiers, while the staff sergeants supervise ten to twelve soldiers. Lieutenants are responsible for 30-40 soldiers while the captains may have a unit exceeding 150 soldiers.

Media relations refers to the contact between members of the military and representatives of the media. Media relations skills are those techniques military members use to deal with media representatives.

A standard definition of a successful media encounter does not exist. Each observer or participant judges media engagements individually, and without the assistance of universally accepted criteria. For this research, the MP's actions within the media encounter were evaluated against the Defense Department's Principles of Information. Chapter 3 identified the specific evaluating criteria based upon the principles. (See Appendix A for Principles of Information). Essentially, did the military police junior leaders understand and adhere to the intent of the DOD principles of information with respect to their units' activities? And, did these soldiers provide the maximum amount of information possible to the media without compromising operations security? These soldiers were evaluated against the requirements to allow for an accounting of their activities to the American public. As representatives of the federal government, the soldiers had legal and moral responsibilities during military operations. This thesis addressed the junior leaders' level of proficiency in fulfilling these requirements.

Limitations

The amount of specific incidents involving military police junior leaders is limited. Incidents normally do not receive national attention. Significant events may overshadow routine media encounters, causing military leaders to overlook recording each media encounter. Reports of incidents originate from military police, public affairs personnel, civilian journalists, training

reports, and military after-action reviews. Each record contains potential for the author's personal bias which may affect the historical account.

Delimitations

While information in this thesis is applicable to all military specialties, this research was limited to evaluating US Army military police junior leaders encountering media personnel. The US Army military police operate using a three-person team concept during wartime situations or in stability and support operations. The leader of the three-person team, by doctrine, is a noncommissioned officer in the rank of sergeant. During peacetime law enforcement operations, military police may use one- or two-person patrols, but always under the supervision of an MP noncommissioned officer, either a patrol supervisor or desk sergeant. Doctrinally, military police units operate over an extensive area during wartime and contingency operations. Consequently, decentralized decision making is routine. This practice enables military police to provide the most flexible and effective support. Captains command MP companies, and lieutenants lead subordinate elements called platoons. Generally located away from company headquarters, platoon leaders operate under indirect supervision. This method of operation contrasts with other military units whose companies are within close proximity to their next higher headquarters. Despite their significant authority over soldiers, captains and lieutenants possess limited experience. For the purpose of this thesis, MP junior leaders include captains and lieutenants. Due to their large area of responsibility, these junior officers have numerous opportunities for critical decision making, and as such, possess great potential to interact with the media. The junior noncommissioned officers—sergeants and staff sergeants—are MP junior leaders in the context of this thesis. By MP doctrine, those noncommissioned officers are squad leaders and team leaders, the first line leaders for soldiers.

Significance of the Study

For today's military police, challenges and crisis situations are not only a wartime phenomenon. Military police perform home station law enforcement duties similar to civilian police officers, combat support operations in wartime, and a variety of duties in military operations other than war. Each of these situations draws the American public's interest and the media's attention. According to the "Military Police White Paper," military police involvement in security and support operations has occurred for over twelve years. Deployments will continue because military police units offer the right mix of trained soldiers and lethal and nonlethal weapon systems.

The unique capabilities of Military Police as a combat support and law and order force, coupled with the domestic and international acceptability of their unit image, frequently make them the most appropriate force for operations other than war, particularly at the lower end of the full range of operations Military Police possess robust move, shoot, and communication capabilities and project a "protect, assist, and defend" image that is particularly important when tailoring a force that requires significant capabilities but a low force signature.⁴³

Military police deployments within the past twelve years included company and battalion-sized units performing a diverse range of missions. The following discussion provides just a small sampling of the varied locations and their substantially different missions. To fulfill these requirements, military police combat support companies normally deployed as part of a military police battalion or brigade-sized force.

During Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada, military police performed peace enforcement, security and protection, law and order patrols with the Grenada police, enemy prisoner of war, civilian internee, and police training assistance operations. When prison inmates rioted in Atlanta, Georgia, US Army Military Police provided critical assistance to domestic civil authorities by projecting a show of force, crowd control, and law and order operations. After Hurricane Hugo destroyed vast areas within the Virgin Islands severely hampering essential services and local

security, military police furnished vital humanitarian assistance, law and order, and disaster relief operations. During Operation Promote Liberty in Panama, military police were instrumental in rebuilding the Panamanian National Police, conducting joint security operations and ensuring law and order within the community. Joint Task Force Bravo in Honduras witnessed the military police assist personnel reduce the flow of drugs, force protection for government elements fighting the drug war, and counterterrorism operations. Within our own country, military police deployed to Los Angeles to assist city and state officials in reducing civil disturbances tormenting the city.

This thesis reviewed incidents of military police encounters with news media representatives. It presents recommendations which balance First Amendment freedoms and operations security. Previous media studies addressed media relations with field commanders or elected officials and not junior military leaders.

The primary question to answer is: Are Military Police junior leaders sufficiently trained in media skills to successfully perform their full range of missions? Secondary questions are: What is the importance of the media to the military? What is the importance of the military to the media? And, what is the likelihood of media encounters for military police leaders and soldiers?

¹The historical background of the military and media relationship is discussed in the Gannett Foundation Report, The Media At War: The Press and The Persian Gulf Conflict (New York: Columbia University, 1991), 1-16.

²William M. Hammond, The Military and the Media: 1962-1968 (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1990), 4.

³Marvin Covault, interviewed by Larry King, 16 November 1995, Larry King Live, Cable News Network, Atlanta, GA.

⁴Gannett, 9.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 10.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 11.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 12.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 14.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 15.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., 16.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ CNN: The War in the Gulf (Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1991), 13.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Peter Arnett, Live From the Battlefield (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 408-409.

²⁷ The bombing of the Amiriya shelter which housed over 300 Iraqi civilians became an incident which gained significant media attention.

²⁸ Ibid., 415.

²⁹ Harold W. Chase and Craig R. Ducat, Constitutional Interpretation: Cases--Essays--Materials (Minnesota: West Publishing Co., 1979), 1279.

³⁰ Ibid., 1293.

³¹ Ibid., 1295.

³² Ibid.

³³ Twenty Century Fund Task Force Report on the Military and the Media, Battle Lines (New York: Priority Press, 1985), 22.

³⁴ Ibid., 9.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., 13.

³⁷ Ibid., 21.

³⁸ Scales, Robert H., Certain Victory: The US Army in the Gulf War (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army, 1993), 137.

³⁹ Ibid., 138.

⁴⁰ John J. Fialka, Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War (Washington, DC: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1991), 56-57.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 59-60.

⁴³ Directorate of Doctrine, Combat and Training Developments Organizations Division, US Army Military Police School, "Military Police Support to Operations Other Than War White Paper" (Fort McClellan, AL: US Army Military Police School, 1994), 3.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a significant amount of information regarding the relationship between the military and representatives of American media. Members of the news media, military leaders, and government officials extensively reviewed all aspects of this issue. Consequently, information regarding conflicts between the military and media dated back to the Civil War and continued through to current military commitments.

Representatives of the military and media each examined their relationship after conflicts involving American troops. Following the protest of media representatives after their exclusion from Grenada for the first two days, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Vessey commissioned a panel to review the issue, known as the Sidle Panel. Vessey established the study to identify the best solution to accommodate media access and preserve operations security. Unfortunately, the Sidle Panel did not contain representatives from the major news organizations. Some civilian reporters, however, did testify before the panel and ultimately contributed to the panel's report.

The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, consolidated recommendations from military organizations concerning the conduct of media relations before and during military operations. CALL distributed those suggestions in newsletters to major military units for dissemination and implementation. Entitled, "In the Spotlight: Media and the Tactical Commander," CALL newsletter no. 92-7 addressed the issue of civilian news coverage, semi-

permanent attachment of media to military units, unescorted media, soldier and family member interviews, and training tips.

The report identified the successfulness of establishing relationships between military personnel and journalists. "Reporters who stayed with units for extended periods provided more accurate and balanced coverage than reporters who visited a unit for a day or two. The reporters, leaders and soldiers developed a sense of mutual trust."¹ On unescorted media, the newsletter advised unit leaders to train soldiers on recognition of the media's credentials and procedures for contacting public affairs personnel concerning unauthorized press in their area. As stated, "The goal is not to restrict media access but to ensure the representatives are legitimate reporters and to prevent them from interfering with operations."² The newsletter explained that accreditation and escorting are not for press safety. "The media have made it clear they know the risks of covering a war and that they do not want restrictions placed on their movement to protect them."³ Also included is the recommendation to units to provide limited logistical assistance to reporters.

According to a Division PAO in Desert Storm:

The Army chief of staff, maybe as a result of a conversation with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs [of Staff], told the division commanders that we could win every battle but lose the war if we did not include the media. The instructions to the division commanders were to support the media as much as possible.⁴

Lastly, the newsletter advocated media-encounter training in individual and collective training as well as for soldiers' families.

Soldiers and family members need to understand that the media represent the American public and are not the enemy. They need to understand their rights to talk or refuse to talk to the media. They also need to realize how talking to the media can support and contribute to the mission.⁵

Currently, the likelihood of the junior soldier or leader speaking directly to representatives of the press may be underestimated. As one public affairs officer expressed, "You can trust

soldiers; they are perceived, in fact, by both the public and the media as our most credible spokespersons.”⁶

After the Gulf War, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Gordon R. Sullivan commissioned a team of active Army officers, Gulf veterans, and subject-matter experts to critically review AARs and conduct interviews for a factual account of the war. In addition to examining other issues arising from the conflict, the resulting report Certain Victory: The US Army in the Gulf War addressed the military’s procedures for accommodating news media from late 1990 through early 1991. In its own words, the commission “looks not only at the Army’s successes but also at its failures as beacons to light the way to the future.”⁷ General Sullivan echoed the significance of this report, “The book has captured both good and bad lessons from the Gulf experience and molded them into a model for a future Force Projection Army that will drive our decisions for many years to come.”⁸

In the report, the team concluded that the security in the planning process of the ground war campaign and its classification of “Top Secret, Special Category,” was prudent despite the uncompromising restrictions on the press. “The CINC’s legitimate concern with operational security greatly limited access to the plan even within his own headquarters. Restrictions on media access to sensitive areas that might jeopardize the plan were even more severe.”⁹ In its opinion, the panel considered the surprise needed to move 255,000 soldiers into positions without alerting Saddam Hussein. If Hussein had identified the movement, he could have lengthened the defensive barrier or reoriented his Republican Guard forces to address that threat. The panel concurred with the planning group’s assessment that either reaction would have caused the deaths of thousands of US or allied soldiers. The team specifically addressed the technological capability of the press and its potentially damaging consequences. “In the era of instant global communications where raw,

unfiltered information is routinely broadcast, any similar leak would have found its way to Baghdad within minutes.”¹⁰

Members of national news organizations also conducted studies aimed at improving the relationship between military leaders and the press for better reporting on military events. Similar to the military, national news organizations examined past limitations on press and planned proposals to avoid conflicts during future military operations. Their goal was to reduce the reluctance of military leaders to be forthcoming with the press.

One civilian organization which examined military and media interaction is the Freedom Forum, based in Arlington, Virginia. Formerly known as the Gannett Foundation, this organization “is dedicated primarily to supporting national, international and community programs that foster the First Amendment freedoms of press, speech, assembly, petition and religion and the free exercise thereof by and for all peoples.”¹¹ The Forum’s principal undertaking is the Media Studies Center, and by its own admission, “is the nation’s first institute for the advanced study of mass communication and technological change.”¹² The Center’s stated goals are “to enhance media professionalism, foster greater public understanding of how the media work, strengthen journalism education and examine the effects on society of mass communication and communications technology.”¹³

Another organization that evaluated the military and media relationship is the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation. Its President and Chief Executive Officer Neal Creighton cited this foundation as unique among its contemporaries because “it supports both the free press and the military—institutions that have often found themselves at odds with each other.”¹⁴ Creighton explained that the foundation’s father Colonel Robert R. McCormick was a battalion commander in World War I, and later the editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. According to Creighton, “He [McCormick] believed intensely that both a strong military and a free press are

essential to the preservation of a free society.”¹⁵ In pursuit of its purpose, this foundation sponsored the Cantigny Conference Series to meet with other associations that address the same issue. Conference participants included military and news media personnel. Two pertinent conferences addressed “Reporting the Next War” and “The Military and the Media: The Continuing Dialogue.”

Convened in April 1992, the conference “Reporting the Next War” discussed the inherent differences between military leaders and war correspondents and addressed the areas of conflict between the two institutions: control and access. For those military leaders concerned about operations security, one newspaperman stated,

It may be that those of you in the military do not trust that Americans would be able to tolerate the reality of war and still show the resolve that it takes to fight and win even in a just cause. But I am afraid that this is where the differences in our institutions are the starkest. If Americans cannot accept what you do on their behalf, then it should not be done. It is just that simple. No other position even begins to accord with the idea of self-government.¹⁶

The Pentagon’s response was that operations security may call for a review of news material prior to release to ensure compliance within established ground rules.

Military commanders have a duty—a legal obligation, in fact—to safeguard the success of a military operations and the lives of their troops. They understand that reporters don’t want to jeopardize that either. But what of a reporter who inadvertently reports something that seems innocuous but turns out to be of great value to the enemy? An operation might be compromised. Soldiers could conceivably be put at risk.¹⁷

Both arguments, commonly held opinions within their respective institutions, possessed significant credibility. Unfortunately, neither argument readily identified a compromise.

On training of military personnel to deal with the media, conference participants acknowledged public affairs officers received sufficient training, but questioned whether senior officers acquired enough. Military commanders believed “they would benefit greatly from more one-on-one contact with the media.”¹⁸ Media participants held that some in the military need to change their attitude about the press, and this should be addressed in training. In particular, they

observed that those senior officers who were overly sensitive about "bad press" caused more problems than the reports themselves. This reaction resulted in junior officers avoiding news coverage to dodge the "heat from above" that follows a bad story.

Conference participants noted some positive results from Operation Desert Storm news coverage. Commanders noticed higher morale in troops who learned of the public's support for them and their mission. Some "bad" reports resulted in improvements in safety and weapons systems and the realization for the public of the difficulties of fighting in the desert. News coverage also provided timely information for the soldiers' families and friends back home. Some within the military even detected a lessening of the animosity between them and the press. "The Gulf War was an improvement. The media gave me an impression of fairness and honesty," one commander commented.¹⁹

In summary, this conference validated the need for training, continued cooperation, and communication between military leaders and press representatives. Both sides disagreed over the issue of security review. Neither side fully understood the implications of the rapid advances in technology which changed media processes for news transmissions. Finally, the following comment expressed a prevailing thought throughout the conference.

Professionals in both the military and the media view their jobs as being intensely important to the health and survival of the republic. The nation must have both an effective military to safeguard the peace and an effective media to provide the public with the information it needs to judge the actions of the government.²⁰

Approximately 18 months after the first conference, the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation sponsored a second seminar to continue progress in the military and media relationship. Participants included General Walter E. Boomer, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; General (retired) Michael Dugan, former Chief of the US Air Force; Wolf Blitzer, CNN's senior White House correspondent; Dan Rather, co-anchor CBS evening news; and other senior

journalists and military officers. The issues of access and control again surfaced at this conference. Many attendees were concerned about satellite communications capabilities and limitations. Media participants wanted journalists at key locations, with the troops, in the midst of the operation. Military leaders were concerned about logistical requirements for the large number of accompanying journalists and broadcast crews. Commenting on the increase in American media from the 100 journalists in World War II to the number covering military operations today, Vice-Admiral (retired) James E. Service stated,

We have witnessed an explosion of American media. The brigade commander is in charge of making sure an operation is as successful as possible. To do this takes a tremendous amount of concentration, and the impact of the media can be incredibly disruptive. Sure there's curiosity back home about what's going on, but they're most interested in seeing Johnny's bacon come home safe. I've got to be able to concentrate totally on the job at hand.²¹

Many attendees were concerned about a culture gap between the military and the American public. With the elimination of the selective service system, fewer Americans are knowledgeable of, or have experience with, the military and its operations. One Admiral noted the implications of this change.

The loss of the draft is a loss to the military, because society does not understand the military as well as it once did, and a loss to society because the military does not reflect society as closely as it did. If contact doesn't come by way of the draft, the military has to build bridges. I want us to have contact with American society at large.²²

Conference participants agreed that the media was a means to help bridge the gap. They also concluded that continued training of both military personnel and journalists is key to understanding and cooperation. Some suggestions included integrating journalists into military exercises and military personnel working with news organizations. Both sides advocated the publication of manuals to enhance correspondents' specific knowledge of the military, and of quarterly periodicals to focus on current events impacting their association. Many supported the

Foundation's proposal for a permanent military-media center to promote studies, education, and training programs about the military-media relationship.

The Twentieth Century Fund, founded in 1919, "is an independent research foundation which undertakes policy studies of economic, political, and social institutions and issues."²³ Its 1985 report, from a task force studying the military and the media, Battle Lines examined the history of the relationship, evaluated constitutional issues, discussed the two distinct cultures, and commented about the Sidle Panel report. The task force members included professional journalists, broadcasters, civilian defense officials and senior military officers.

An interesting conclusion of the diverse panel is "the presence of journalists in war zones is not a luxury but a necessity."²⁴ The consensus of the members was that an independent press "serves as the vital link between the battlefield and the home front,"²⁵ resulting in the media helping to foster public commitment. The task force recognized the need for some restraints on the press, but cited Normandy in 1944 and Khe Sanh in South Vietnam in 1968 as two examples that the press ought to be on hand "to report as freely as possible on what was--and was not--happening in the war zone."²⁶ It acknowledged that the American public was not always well informed, partly due to the competence of journalists and partly to the lack of candor and adequate knowledge of the military spokesman. The fog of war also played a role in the information dissemination process. Task force members referred to World War II as a "time of patriotic harmony when the press, at home and abroad, was on the team,"²⁷ and contrasted it with predictions of future wars. Members expected that regional strife would dominate, and, unlike global conflicts, regional hostilities do not readily spur unified support. The report also mentioned threats to US journalists in foreign countries as another reason for continued cooperation between US military and media representatives. The implication for military police commanders, as well as all military leaders, is the news media's commitment to coverage of future military operations.

On the constitutionality of media coverage, the task force identified a difference between freedom of the press and the right of access to a war zone. The task force preferred to see a compromise between the government and the media, rather than allowing the courts to decide. "Precise legal determinations of press rights in combat could be contentious and might end up limiting press freedoms in the effort to preserve them."²⁸ With respect to the operation in Grenada, the task force expressed outrage at the senior military and civilian decision makers.

The traditional arrangement between press and government was disrupted by the deliberate exclusion from Grenada of all reporters during the first 2 days of the operation and then by the government's failure to plan for the timely accommodations of journalists.²⁹

Samuel Huntington disagreed with the right of free access that the task force supported and stated, "the First Amendment could not give a right of access to military operations to journalists without giving it to all Americans—which it obviously does not."³⁰ Huntington supported government assistance to the media so "that both the public and decision makers should have an independent source of information,"³¹ but did not advocate creating a special "right of access" for journalists. Regardless of the final resolution of this issue, military commanders can expect the presence of journalists in the future theaters of operation and should plan accordingly.

Concerning the issue of operations security, the task force agreed that "the field commander must be the final arbiter of what constitutes a threat to the security of his operations."³² Members believed the civilian authorities and the PAO should guide the commander in accommodations to television crews. The task force also noted the limited frequency of operations security problems in the past. "It is worth remembering that in Vietnam, military spokesmen can recall only a handful of security violations among the hundreds of accredited journalists in Saigon."³³

The task force also pointed out the influence of those military personnel with previous experience with news correspondents.

Both young and old military people seem to be gripped by powerful myths about the media dating from Vietnam. To some extent, this is a response to critical newspaper reporting from Vietnam and Washington during the war and to the widespread belief that television coverage soured public opinion on the war.³⁴

For these reasons, the task force recommended that news organizations train reporters to increase familiarity with the military. This training may be in the form of seminars. The task force also advocated training for the military, specifically addressing the role of the press in American society and their journalistic processes. This recommendation can be applied to military police soldiers who bear a responsibility for security and access control to restricted areas. Understanding the press's legal authority may be instrumental to the success of the mission. With news coverage of an operation imminent, commanders should ensure that all soldiers possess a thorough knowledge of press limits, similar to the understanding of rights-warning procedures. It also becomes a measure of success for the unit to receive an accurate reporting of its actions to its military leaders, civilian officials, and the American public.

Comments on the Sidle Panel report began with an assessment of civilian supremacy over the military and the government's inherent obligations in the media issue. "The Task Force believes that just as the president and his civilian deputies bear the responsibility for prosecuting a war, so must they assume responsibility for policy decisions on press access and censorship."³⁵ Other comments on the Sidle Panel report included an agreement for public affairs planning in anticipation of media presence on the battlefield and additional media training for military personnel. The basic tenet governing press access, according to the panel, should be voluntary compliance with military-established ground rules and security guidelines. This is significant to all military commanders as the President or his civilian deputies may direct specific actions for military personnel who deal with press representatives.

Final comments by General Winan Sidle, Chairman of the Sidle Panel, offered an understanding to the delicate balance of this issue. "The appropriate media role in relation to the government has been summarized aptly as being neither that of a lap dog nor an attack dog but, rather, a watch dog. Mutual antagonism and distrust are not in the best interests of the media, the military, or the American people."³⁶ General Sidle's optimum solution rested with each individual involved in the process.

To ensure proper media coverage of military operations will be to have the military--represented by competent, professional public affairs personnel and commanders who understand media problems--working with the media--represented by competent, professional reporters and editors who understand military problems--in a nonantagonistic atmosphere.³⁷

Additionally, as with many controversial issues, individual journalists wrote about personal experiences reporting on military operations. Their personal accounts reflected not only individual challenges, but also other reporters' interactions with military leaders. These authors also discussed the relationship between the military and the media, and the principles which support their access to military operations. Peter Arnett's book Live From the Battlefield offered his experiences as a war correspondent from the Vietnam War through his controversial reporting at Baghdad in the midst of the Gulf War. Perry Smith, a retired Major General, was a consultant for Cable News Network during the Persian Gulf War. His book, How CNN Fought the War: A View From The Inside, offered a perspective from an individual with experience in both military and media organizations. John Fialka's book Hotel Warriors closely examined media restrictions during the Gulf War and provided an alternate opinion from CNN reporters. William Hammond's The Military and the Media, 1962-1968 examined the Vietnam War years from a journalist's perspective while Harry Summers' On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War provided a military officer's perspective of the same war. A limiting factor to these accounts is a potential for personal bias when relating specific incidents or restrictions.

Harry Summers' analysis of the Vietnam War included comments of the media coverage and the military's reaction. He, too, believed military personnel unfairly blamed the media for failure in that conflict.

There is a tendency in the military to blame our problems with public support on the media. This is too easy an answer. Certainly there were some who reported enemy propaganda, but the majority of on-the-scene reporting from Vietnam was factual—that is reporters honestly reported what they had seen firsthand. Much of what they saw was horrible, for that is the true nature of war. It was this horror, not the reporting that so influenced the American people.³⁸

On the effect of television coverage of the war, Summers identified the peculiarities of the medium which caused new considerations. He cited the Washington Post columnist, Henry Fairlie's description of television in July 1980. "It is in the nature of most important events to be dull, and by nature television cannot handle the dull.... It is monstrously untrue that the camera cannot lie. It is the most eager and pliant of liars." Fairlie continued by explaining that the camera not only relied on motion, but also, a particular kind of action. "It is adept at catching the moment of police brutality.... But the long hours of provocation that yielded that brutality? The camera hasn't the eye for that."³⁹ This characteristic of the television camera has particular impact for military police soldiers in any operation, whether in garrison or during deployment. Military police soldiers perform tasks which routinely are uneventful; but because of the soldiers' inherent authority and responsibility and a situation's unpredictability, an incident can very quickly capture attention.

In his closing, Summers applied the principles of war to his analysis of Vietnam. Security and surprise, he noted, demonstrated "the inherent conflict between a free and democratic American society and the need for security in the conduct of US military operations."⁴⁰ He seriously questioned the probability that the government would ever again attempt to censor the press. He cited experiences in Vietnam as an example of the media not betraying any tactical

security, however: "the very nature of their craft makes it almost impossible for them to preserve strategic security and surprise."⁴¹ Despite this inevitability, Summers stated that the public should demand information about their government's actions and pointed to the media to provide the means for obtaining it. Summers maintained that any alternative to that is contrary to democracy and the fundamental belief that the military belongs to the American people.

Author Joseph L. Galloway, a noted war correspondent during the Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars, discussed the importance of trust and friendship between journalists and military leaders.⁴² He explained this trust begins long before the battle and is best when both meet early in their careers, particularly if the young journalist travels with, lives with, and suffers alongside soldiers in the officer's command. The correspondent then becomes a part of the organization and creates a significant bond with members of that unit. "We're in the human relations business, the people business, and you have to like people. You have to connect with people, listen to people, and read what's in their heart." His advice to young reporters is to follow his path, establish a trust with the soldiers and leaders, and become part of that unit within bounds. Galloway explained his free access to soldiers assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam. The Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Harold G. Moore, issued some very simple rules to Galloway: "Don't get in the way, don't print stories with information of use to the enemy, don't print where we're moving, and don't print the number of casualties before the end of the battle." Moore's guidance to his soldiers was just as simple: "Tell the truth and speak from your pay grade [your personal knowledge]." Galloway explained his concurrence with the directive, "You can't set out to teach every specialist to deal with Mike Wallace, but you can teach them to tell the truth and from their level."⁴³

Another example that highlighted the value of long-term trusting relationships is Galloway's experience with the 24th Infantry Division during Desert Storm. Two weeks prior to

the start of the ground war, Major General Barry R. McCaffrey briefed Galloway on the battle plan. He said, "I trust you [Galloway] because Schwartzkopf does and because you're coming with us." Galloway mentioned that he did not know the general, but had walked miles through the jungles of Vietnam with a then-Major Norman Schwartzkopf. It was his close relationship over the many years that established this opportunity with the 24th Division commander. Galloway did not know how common this practice of sharing sensitive information with reporters was, but he did not think his was an isolated case. He also commented that those reporters who did violate operations security rules usually fall within Darwin's survival of the fittest theory. In other words, those reporters will probably not return with their units and continue professional careers. To put into perspective his personal feelings for control of sensitive information, Galloway discussed a CNN broadcast reporting potential US forces' movement shortly after his briefing from the commander. Galloway found himself chastising the broadcasters. "This is me saying, 'Don't talk like that.' It was me realizing that I was going across that desert, too."⁴⁴

Throughout his time with the 24th, Galloway interviewed numerous soldiers and leaders and moved freely throughout the division and brigade tactical operations centers (TOC). After completing his interviews, he gave his stories to the division PAO who faxed them to Galloway's boss 24 hours after division elements crossed the border into Iraq. "It didn't hurt me sending it in late, and you get a great story when it's over." With the military force size decreasing, Galloway noted that the trust of military leaders in particular reporters was even more important. As the Army gets smaller and smaller, and more of a closed community, the word gets around on those reporters who do wrong. He explained that with the military, unlike the rest of society, a person's word is worth something and reputation is everything.

In terms of press access to the military, Galloway firmly believed in open access within limits. When humanly possible, he stated, the media ought to be able to get to the war zone with

the assistance of the PAO. He maintained that it is his job—to get to a unit, spend time with the soldiers, and see how they are trained, led, and protected. Galloway understood that Army logistics cannot support an unlimited number of journalists. Rather, he advocated assigning a reasonable amount to each unit to report how well the military is taking care of America's sons and daughters. Galloway also stated that the division commander should possess some influence over which reporters accompany his organization, to include asking for specific correspondents who write for newspapers available to his soldiers' families. Galloway cited a particular reporter for the Georgia Ledger, Charlie Black, who spent years with troops in the 1st Cavalry Division. Galloway considered him one of the most effective reporters because he spent so much time with the soldiers, wrote long reports, and mentioned every name. The paper printed all of his stories, and although Black wasn't successful in making a significant amount of money, he did earn the respect and love of the troops. Black wrote for their families, and for that, Galloway explained, the troops did anything for him.

When asked about the possibility that press personnel believe media skills training discourages soldiers from "telling it like it is,"⁴⁵ Galloway responded in favor of the training. "Training shouldn't be seen as not getting the story because you are not training to lie, but how to be an effective speaker and how to get your point across."⁴⁶ He noted that media skills training was common in business, in the Pentagon, and in other government agencies. "You cannot demand everyone to be the unarmed innocent."⁴⁷ With respect to military police soldiers, he added that they should receive an education about the media, what they look like, how they act, what they are after, and to what lengths they will go. He also commented that the soldiers had to do their jobs, and if the orders were to keep reporters out, they could accomplish that with tact and "not pick a fight with the guy."⁴⁸

On many occasions, Galloway maintained, the Army wasted opportunities to display the end result of ten years of growth and development. He charged that the military missed the chance to improve the military and media relationship, and rather than evaluate why Vietnam occurred, military leaders blamed the press and "by scapegoating the press obviated the need for further evaluation."⁴⁹ In the Persian Gulf, the military ruined another opportunity to educate reporters, Galloway explained that, instead, journalists stayed in hotels and had limited time for photographing and interviewing soldiers. He cited the announcement of a two hour visit and interview with 82nd Airborne Division soldiers. Two hundred journalists signed up, but only 18 were able to see the unit. These 18 reporters may have picked the worst soldiers to represent the unit as they had no interaction time with the soldiers to determine credibility.

Colonel Richard M. Bridges, Editor in Chief of Military Review and an Army PAO, has extensive experience with the media and with military police officers and soldiers performing a variety of missions.⁵⁰ Chapter 4 lists his specific incidents involving military police. Bridges stressed the military is not an elitist organization and "we come from the American public."⁵¹ Because the military is entrusted with the nation's resources, both monetary and human, Bridges explained that military leaders owe the public accountings of their dealings with America's sons and daughters. He discussed that the military does not have the independent means to talk with the public. Rather, the media afforded the opportunity to communicate with the public, and the military incurred a legal and moral responsibility in democracy to do that. The failure to do so "doesn't fit the meaning or the intent of our Constitution or the profession to which we have devoted our lives."⁵²

Historically, according to Bridges, the military always professed to be open with the media. He cited General Eisenhower in Normandy who gave his own news release, and, gave the media, who were in uniform at the time and under military supervision, unlimited license on the

battlefield. At odds since the Civil War, the military and media relationship dipped in Vietnam, Bridges noted. He also professed a view similar to Galloway's concerning the media's role in Vietnam. "We in the military chose to blame the media for the failure. It wasn't a military failure, it was a failure of policy."⁵³

Looking to the future, Bridges saw an increased experience for the military with the media. "As technology advances, the necessity to deal with the media increases. The telegraph gave a new outlook of the media for the military of that era. Now we are dealing with the satellite technology."⁵⁴ In the next war, Bridges predicted commanders will watch CNN monitor their units' movements to contact. "Technology is on the media's side and that forces us to learn how to deal with them."⁵⁵ Bridges also provided this careful warning: "We have to be able to deal with them to account for what we are doing. If we choose not to account for what we are doing, the media will do that for us and not always to our advantage and not always with the entire truth."⁵⁶

In terms of preparation, Bridges identified some deficiencies in the military's plans for dealing with the press. Citing a "culture lag," he explained that the military is always accused of studying and fighting the last war and it is the same with the media. "We are still operating under lessons from Desert Shield and Desert Storm and have not adjusted. We have lost sight of the advances of technology that are occurring around us."⁵⁷ He offered this guidance for success, "We need to be as forward looking with regard to our dealings with the media as we are with the descriptions and desires for new weaponry."⁵⁸ He summed up his personal observation with, "We do real well at fighting wars, but we don't do real well explaining it; much like Desert Storm, when we were ready to talk about it, it was too late, the media was off on another story. Media should be with us from the beginning."⁵⁹

Lieutenant Colonel James Gleisberg is an Army PAO with previous duty assignments in the 101st Division at Fort Campbell, KY and VII Corps during Operations Desert Shield and

Desert Storm in Southwest Asia.⁶⁰ Gleisberg explained that public affairs is a commander's program. He also noted that public affairs must be a continuous educational process for all leaders and soldiers. He proposed that media skills training be taught in the professional development courses, particularly for military police, who were often the first soldiers the media encountered. Gleisberg explained the inclusion of media skills in the courses taught at the MP school would benefit in several ways. First, during a crisis, a commander who understands the impact of the media may not have time to articulate his intent before his soldiers meet the press. Media training in the professional development courses would provide basic skills for the MP to survive the encounter. Secondly, all soldiers would receive the same information if the training was part of the core curriculum, similar to the three-hour media training for the Command and General Staff College students. This is the only way to ensure all are on the same level. Gleisberg compared it to the common skills training required for all soldiers. In his experience, media skills training for soldiers was critical. "If the MP knew the media was coming and [was provided] some guidance, they did it well. If there was no advance notice, it was screwed up."⁶¹

Gleisberg also noted that media skills training should not be limited to the predeployment phase. When preparing for war, he stated that commanders are concerned with the fight and not the media. "The media training will fall out because time becomes a critical resource. The soldiers and families will experience too many requirements and not all can be fulfilled."⁶²

Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Spataro, currently the commander of the 705th Military Police Battalion, US Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and a former Provost Marshal with the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, Georgia, has extensive experience with military police soldiers and members of the press.⁶³ While on deployment in Somalia for Operation Restore Hope, Spataro received the mission to talk to a CNN reporter. The guidance for Spataro was simply to tell the reporter what he (Spataro) wanted broadcast about the mission. Although

successful with the journalist, Spataro felt the media skills training and guidance for this meeting was insufficient. After witnessing some interviews with soldiers and Marines, Spataro recommended increased media skills training for soldiers of all ranks. The Marines are accustomed to having a microphone in front of them, and they do very well, benefiting their mission, Spataro explained. In sharp contrast, some military police soldiers responded to questions with "no comment," even regarding those things that the reporter personally viewed.

On specific training to deal with journalists, Spataro recommended that soldiers know both the mission of the press and the mission of their unit. They should receive rules of engagement (ROE) on the media much like the ROE they receive for any situation, he added. "Media can be your friend; they don't have to be your enemy."⁶⁴ He cited as an example a particular site at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Because of the location's security classification, the press did not have access. This case was different than in Somalia where correspondents enjoyed free access to military operations. The soldiers at the sensitive location had to understand the mission and its intent, and to know what information they could release to the press. Spataro recommended some commonsense advice for anyone dealing with journalists: "If the media can see what you are doing, you should tell them what they see or explain why you cannot."⁶⁵ He also recommended that young soldiers who felt they could not talk to the media should request a supervisor and explain to the reporter that they are awaiting the supervisor's arrival.

On dealing with media personnel in a deployed environment, Spataro recommended assignment of journalists to specific units for extended periods of time. This practice allowed reporters and soldiers to develop a relationship and understanding of each other which enhanced the credibility of both. It also facilitated the training of the war correspondents who may not be familiar with military operations. Reporters saw the orders and conditions of the environment and felt the stress of the situation. Much like the Stockholm syndrome,⁶⁶ Spataro explained that the

journalist talks as if he is one of us, and sees the mission firsthand. To illustrate this idea, Spataro spoke of some units in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm, where leaders aligned reporters with reservists from their states. This technique not only enhanced the media opportunity for those units, but it increased the morale of the soldiers' families back in the US.

Spataro believes this training in media skills should begin at a soldier's first duty station and for officers in the professional development courses. The training should continue throughout the soldier's assignments. At Fort Stewart, he incorporated media skills as part of the routine training program. Every six months, the soldiers participated in scenarios with reporters, with the ultimate goal of certification similar to a law enforcement training program. When asked about media skills training limited to just pre-deployment opportunities, Spataro disagreed. He described an experience with his current special reaction team at the United States Army Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Concerning local press coverage, Spataro noted that initially, members of the team were reluctant to participate in any media interviews because they thought it would compromise their operations security. Spataro, however, provided guidance to the soldiers identifying the type of information appropriate to release. He also explained that the opportunity contributed to a positive image that enhanced the deterrent effect of the team as well as encouraged other correctional agencies to train with them. He expected his soldiers to be in the local or post newspaper twice a month. He explained the advantage of increased press coverage. The published articles and pictures of his soldiers performing their missions causes the community to become more familiar with the military police. The familiarity reduced the community's fear of the military police and led to a less threatening environment. Because of the increased knowledge of the military police missions and operations, the public formed a favorable opinion of the soldiers. Spataro offered the following guidance on media: "answer the obvious, what and why;

explain what can be; and guide the media; do not leave them alone [within your area of operation].”⁶⁷

In garrison operations and some deployment missions, military police performed functions very similar to civilian law enforcement officials. Police officers in large metropolitan cities as well as small rural counties experienced media encounters. They, like their military counterparts, owed accountability of their actions to the public they are sworn to protect. Police Chief magazine, the official publication of the Association of the Chiefs of Police, recently printed an article entitled, “Crisis Management and Media Relations for Small Agencies.” The author Chief V. Lavoyed Hudgins, Enterprise Police Department, Alabama, emphasized the criticality of planning for media involvement in any crisis. “Many law enforcement managers have found themselves overwhelmed upon their arrival at a crisis scene. In addition to considering tactical field issues, they must feed what seems to be a voracious media appetite for information.”⁶⁸ Hudgins identified the media’s motive during the crisis and a potential police reaction. “Although it is easy to take offense at their aggressiveness at a scene, we must understand their position. It is their responsibility to provide information--and such pressures as deadlines and the public interest drive their methods.”⁶⁹ These comments are relevant to military police who also come into contact with the media in a crisis situation and are usually the first official presence with the reporters.

Hudgins also offered tips on dealing with the media and recommendations for handling erroneous information and follow-up requirements. “When it seems that conjecture is becoming news, the agency must immediately take steps to get the correct information to the public. In some cases, the rumors may be so inflammatory and potentially harmful that it is necessary to deviate from the regularly scheduled briefing in order to set the record straight.”⁷⁰

Hudgins’ final thoughts included making the most of media opportunities. “Each time we deal with the media, it should be seen as an opportunity to get our message across to the public in

the most professional way. For us to lose these opportunities can destroy our credibility as public servants.”⁷¹ Hudgins recognized the impact of the press with this closing remark that once again, is applicable to military police soldiers and leaders, “Let us seize the opportunities good media relations provide in allowing us to become closer to our citizens.”⁷²

In his book Live From the Battlefield, journalist Peter Arnett discussed his intense desire to go to Baghdad in January of 1990, to await the arrival of the United Nations ultimatum to Saddam Hussein. Originally assigned to report on events in Israel, Arnett tried to join the Baghdad team. “Baghdad was going to be the most dangerous place in the world in a few days and, yes, I wanted to be there. It was not a question of bravery; I believed that I could do what had to be done, and that I could survive it.”⁷³

Upon arrival in Baghdad, just prior to the initiation of the air war, Arnett talked to other CNN staff who were debating whether to leave. A CNN engineer commented about Arnett’s desire to be in Iraq at such a dangerous time. “There are people around here who believe you’re a crazy war lover who’ll do anything for a story.” Arnett’s response is consistent with other professional war correspondents.

The key to me is that I do nothing for fun, and what I do I do carefully. I’ve weighed the situation here. We can survive it. I will simply be doing what I’m paid to do. If I bug out of here I feel I would have to give my paycheck back because it would be a disservice to my company that hired me as a reporter.⁷⁴

As noted, Arnett determined he could survive the war. This assumption, however, was not based upon any knowledge of US or Allied war plans. Consequently, his decision to stay in Baghdad and wait out Desert Storm could have easily been the wrong choice. This is significant for military leaders to understand about journalists: despite the warnings of American leaders and identified threats to their safety, some correspondents may elect to remain in a hazardous location to report

the news. Arnett also held his company to the same rigid standard and charged CNN maintained a responsibility to keep the American public informed.

If CNN orders me out of here, Ted Turner should give the public their money back because it will be a disservice to them, and the promises that he had made when he signed them up as subscribers to his twenty-four-hour news network. We can't just walk out on the news.⁷⁵

It thus becomes imperative for military leaders to understand and appreciate the desire, perseverance, and dedication of war correspondents. Military personnel of all ranks must realize that some members of the press possess a commitment to mission accomplishment as strong as any soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine. Much as successful battlefield commanders must interpret the motivation, processes, and objectives of the enemy, successful military leaders must know the same about any element not under their control in the military operations environment—including the media.

¹ Center for Army Lessons Learned, "In the Spotlight: Media and the Tactical Commander," No. 92-7 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Combined Arms Command, 1992), 7.

² Ibid., 8.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., 9.

⁵ Ibid., 10.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Certain Victory. (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, 1993), back cover jacket.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 138.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Gannett Foundation Report, "The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict" (New York: Columbia University, 1991), inside cover.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Cantigny Conference Series: "The Military and the Media: The Continuing Dialogue" (Chicago: Robert R. McCormick Foundation), 1993, 5.

¹⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁶ Cantigny Conference Series: "Reporting The Next War" (Chicago: Robert R. McCormick Foundation, 1992), 22.

¹⁷ Ibid., 23.

¹⁸ Ibid., 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., 20.

²⁰ Ibid., 53-54.

²¹ "The Military and the Media: The Continuing Dialogue," 15.

²² Ibid., 50.

²³ Twentieth Century Fund Task Force Report on the Military and the Media, Battle Lines (New York: Priority Press Publications, 1985), iv.

²⁴ Ibid., 3-4.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 4.

²⁷ Ibid., 7.

²⁸ Ibid., 6.

²⁹ Ibid., 4.

³⁰ Ibid., 6.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 12.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 9.

³⁵ Ibid., 6.

³⁶ Ibid., 178.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Harry G. Summers, Jr., On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War (California: Presidio Press, 1982), 39.

³⁹ Ibid., 162.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 191.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Joseph L. Galloway, interview by author, Tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 5 Dec 1995. All references to Mr. Galloway are from this interview and his briefing to the Command and General Staff Officers Course class given at Fort Leavenworth, KS, 6 Dec 1995.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Richard M. Bridges, interview by author, Tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS, Oct 1995. All references to Colonel Bridges are from this interview.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ James R. Gleisberg, interview by author, Tape recording, Fort Leavenworth, KS, Feb 1996. All references to Lt. Colonel Gleisberg are from this interview.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Stephen M. Spataro, interview by author. Written record, Fort Leavenworth, KS, Oct 1995. All references to Lt. Colonel Spataro are from this interview.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ This idea refers to the theory that individual(s) held captive for a long period of time may eventually become supportive of their captors.

⁶⁷ Spataro.

⁶⁸ V. Lavoyed Hudgins, "Crisis Management and Media Relations for Small Agencies" Police Chief (Alexandria, Virginia: International Association of Chiefs of Police, Feb 96), 50.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 52.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Peter Arnett, Live From the Battlefield (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 349.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 360.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research methodology for this thesis was a combination of original questionnaires, previous surveys, existing studies, and selected interviews. Recent events provided unexpected, yet pertinent information to this research question. They illustrated the strong possibility of a media encounter for military personnel and the risk associated with less than favorable publicity.

Original questionnaires were sent to military police commanders, junior leaders, soldiers, and public affairs officers who deployed in support of military operations and witnessed the interaction of junior military police leaders and news media representatives. The Military Police School identified military police units deployed within the past five years in support of operations. Commanders and provost marshals of the units provided specific information concerning junior leaders and their interaction with the media. Questions to military personnel inquired about the specific incident, existing public affairs policy, commander's opinion of its success, and commander's definition of success. The questionnaire also solicited resultant actions after the media encounter, for example, retraining in public affairs issues, change in public affairs policy, etc. Public affairs officers received similar questionnaires for their input. (See Appendix B for questionnaire.)

Two previous surveys concerning media skills training and military personnel offered additional sources of military officers' and journalists' perceptions. In 1993, Major Paul A.

Darcy, a student in the Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas polled a representative sampling of his classmates to determine their opinion on the military and media relationship. He included a question concerning training of military personnel in media skills. Of the 252 participating officers, 50 percent felt there should be media training at all military schools. Additionally, over 80 percent of the surveyed group identified the officer basic and advanced courses as the primary vehicles to instruct students in media relations. These results highlighted a belief that current training in media skills was not as extensive as it should be in the professional development programs. (See Appendix E for the specific results.)

In October of 1995, the Army Times published two Freedom Forum surveys addressing publication of information and media access to a war zone. (See Appendix F for questions and responses.) Generally, there was a significant difference concerning the release of information between military and press respondents. This difference was greatest when a perceived threat to operations security existed or battlefield photographs depicted US troop casualties. The poll highlighted the continuation of the "culture divide" between members of the uniformed services and the press. For example, a question concerning media access to a war zone produced the sharpest difference in opinion among the respondents. Some common ground between the two groups, however, did exist. These areas included an observation of the media's lack of knowledge about the military and the value of the press in our society. The study noted, "82 percent of officers and 98 percent of journalists [say] the news media are just as necessary to maintain US freedom as the military."¹

The survey sample was not truly representative of the military. A majority of participants were in the rank of lieutenant colonel or higher. This does not reflect the demographics of the Army which has the majority of personnel in ranks junior to lieutenant colonel. The study, however, did merit evaluation as it presented the reality of the different perspectives between

military and media personnel. To overcome the "culture divide" between these institutions, the authors of the new Freedom Forum report recommended the following technique. "The best insurance against harmful disclosures is to send reporters to live with the troops in the field, where they soon develop understanding."² This is significant for military police commanders who should anticipate the presence of media representatives in any phase of an operation. Additionally, the senior officers' views indicated a willingness to accommodate news organizations.

Existing studies address the historical relationship between the military and the press, and consider the projected relationship for future operations. The studies also provide independent military and media objectives and opinions with respect to their roles in supporting democratic principles. There are also some studies pertinent to this thesis that address the level of training of military personnel in media relations skills. For the purpose of this research, existing studies also include individual accounts from war correspondents involved in US military operations. These accounts supplement the media studies in terms of goals, legal rights arguments, and personal interaction with military personnel.

Selected interviews provided personal perspectives from military leaders and key journalists, ensuring adequate representation of their respective institution's goals, limitations, legal rights and responsibilities. (See Appendix C for interview questions.) Due to the nature of the media, televised interviews offered additional comments from key leaders. In a C-Span "Booknotes" broadcast, Colin Powell, retired Army General and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, contrasted the military-media relationship in Vietnam with the current situation. He explained that a free and open press is necessary. In Vietnam, Powell stated that reporters printed what they saw, witnessed the military create statistics that were not true, and sometimes reported things in a bad light. He advised that the military must now deal with the press, and, "be open, but protect what we need to protect."³ He added that the media will always maintain an

adversarial relationship with the military as a check on the military's stewardship of the country's sons and daughters. When dealing with the press, Powell recommended, "always be as candid and truthful as possible."⁴

The strengths of the selected research methods were the diverse input from many personnel, the recognition and use of exhaustive studies on the military and media relationship, and the opportunity to interview key players personally in the evolution of military and media interaction. The information from military police and public affairs officers provided a recent analysis of soldiers' performance with news organizations.

Military police and public affairs personnel provided specific incidents of junior leaders interacting with the media. A discussion of these incidents is in Chapter 4. These personnel also submitted names of others experienced in the deployment of military units who provided further information appropriate to this research. Public affairs personnel submitted press reports, guidance for deployment, and training summaries to assist in the evaluation of soldiers' media encounters.

Given the specific research question of whether military police junior leaders are trained sufficiently to deal with press representatives, a review of existing studies on the military and media relationship was imperative. Both military and press personnel have recognized the relationship's significance, and consequently, have struggled to improve it. Historical accounts, dating from the Civil War, indicated strict government measures to limit the media. These same accounts also addressed the freedom of action the government extended to press representatives in some military operations. News organizations have published guidance for news reporters and suggestions to military leaders in an effort to ease their strained association. Military leaders commissioned studies to evaluate accommodations to the press and the subsequent threat, if any, to

operations security. Military documents analyzed specific campaigns and units, identifying successes and failures of public affairs issues.

The ability to interview significant personnel added credibility, prevailing thought, individual interpretation of current doctrine, the reality of soldiers' interactions with journalists, and the human factor to this research. Media issues dealt with people, highlighting the good and the bad about individuals. A study of the military and the media during times of conflict must address the ever-present human side to the relationship. With technology permitting instant global communications, military leaders and soldiers are uncertain about the ramifications of inappropriate comments to reporters. The following situations highlighted the human aspect of the military-media issue.

Several senior officials recently experienced problems when dealing with the press. The Commander-in-Chief of Pacific Command, Admiral Richard C. Macke resigned after making some questionable comments concerning sailors involved in an embarrassing criminal trial in Japan. Although Macke later acknowledged his remarks were inappropriate, the Secretary of Defense still called for the Admiral's resignation. In an Army Times article, 4 December 1995, other officers addressed the punishment's reasonableness. "He made a stupid statement, but do you fire the guy for it?" asked one officer. "If he wasn't telling the truth, that would be one thing, but this was a trivial error."⁵ The interviewed officers maintained the "knee-jerk" reaction to this situation demonstrated the intolerance for mistakes in the armed forces. This example highlighted the risk to military personnel when dealing with members of the media.

A senior Army officer's comments to his soldiers in Bosnia prompted several reporters to publish the volatile remarks. The Army officer, a brigade commander, had discussed with his soldiers the possible length of their deployment. His remarks, published nationally, contradicted the US President's official statements concerning the mission's duration. Army Times

subsequently published reports of condemnations of the officer by unnamed senior officials.

Renowned sociologist Charles Moskos addressed the danger of premature decisions by senior officials prior to the investigation's final conclusion. Moskos's letter to the Army Times provided this warning:

To castigate publicly an Army officer before an investigation violates any sense of due process...Such precipitate behavior from on high can only demoralize troops who serve in the colonel's brigade in a mission already fraught with ambiguity and danger.⁶

Moskos also alluded to the hesitancy of military members to cooperate with press representatives and indicated the serious implications of failed cooperation from all parties involved in this issue.

Through all of this one message to officers comes through loud and clear: stay clear of the news media or else your career is in jeopardy. Democratic civil-military relations require that the public knows what its soldiers are doing and thinking. This cannot be done without honest reporting.⁷

Some disadvantages to the research methods of this thesis were the critical reliance on personnel outside of the local area and the limits within some historical accounts. The inability to challenge arguments or clarify uncertainties within existing media or military studies of the issue created only minor concern. Specifically, the material in the study had to be taken at face value. The inherent bias of individuals discussing themselves or events they witnessed did not constitute a significant problem.

Military police and public affairs personnel provided specific incidents of military and media interactions. To properly answer the research question of military police proficiency in media relations, it was essential to receive sufficient data from military units recently involved in deployment operations. Because these deployable units are located throughout the continental United States, interviews occurred via telephone and mail; the latter being less descriptive and with an increased lag time. Historical accounts sometimes lacked sufficient detail. Additionally, personnel may not reveal failures of policy or procedure outside an organization.

Existing media studies afforded many significant insights from the journalists' perspective. Unfortunately, the studies cannot provide a question and answer session for the reader. While the studies covered many issues, the nature of the source prohibited any opportunity for discussion or explanation. For example, The Twentieth Century Fund's report Battle Lines identified dissenting opinions in explanatory footnotes within its document. The footnotes, however, only briefly summarized some pertinent arguments and did not always address the size of the dissenting body. Additionally, some studies did not incorporate members from both the military and the press, limiting their effect on this research. Essentially, those sources provided information from only one side of the debate. Consequently, they were somewhat limited in advocating viable solutions to the balance of information security for the military and information release for the media.

Lastly, individual accounts provided personal perspectives, but also possessed inherent bias. The incidents were still noteworthy and provided valuable data to the research. Knowing each source's background, career experience, and exposure to the military-media issue helped reduce the influence of personal bias. People cannot totally disregard the influence of their past; however, they may reduce the amount their experiences shape their ideas. The personal perspective was important in any evaluation of press interaction because no common standard for measuring successful media encounters existed. Each individual story highlighted some aspect or presented a unique opinion of the delicate balance of the military-media relationship. Yet, it was worth the effort to consider differing beliefs.

Identifying success in a media encounter is normally a subjective exercise. For example, observers of the same media incident may render differing opinions. Given this potential, each MP encounter with the media in this research was measured against the Department of Defense Principles of Information. (See Appendix A) These principles, established as a result of the Sidle Panel, identified the Defense Department's commitment to cooperate with the media, to allow

journalists to witness military actions, and to keep the American public informed on military operations. These DOD principles formed the basis for the Army's public affairs doctrine.

The following questions summarize the intent of the principles of information and provide a common standard to evaluate each account: (1) Did the MP know and understand the public affairs policy with respect to media relations? (2) Were the MP's actions consistent with the public affairs policy? (3) Was information made fully available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release was precluded by current and valid security classification? (4) Did the MP discuss anything above or beyond his pay grade? (This refers to the decision-making level of the individual and the practice of commenting only on policy or procedures which he can influence or change.) (5) Was a free flow of general and military information made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the Armed Forces and their family members? (6) What training, if any, did the MP receive on media relations? (7) Did the MP feel he needed any additional media training? And, (8) What was the impact of the media encounter and the MP's actions on the current operation or policy?

¹ Patrick Pexton, "Censorship of Missions Called Stale Phenomenon," Army Times, (23 Oct 95): 23.

² Ibid.

³ Colin Powell, interviewed on "Booknotes," C-Span television network, (January 1996).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Becky Garrison, "Opinion Split On Macke Ouster," Army Times, (4 Dec 95): 6.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Charles Moskos, letter to the Army Times, (15 Jan 96): 32.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the incidents of military police junior leader encounters with the media. These particular accounts of the interactions with journalists came from the surveys and interviews of MP officers, public affairs officers, and journalists.

The significant deployment of MP units worldwide led to many opportunities for junior leaders to meet media representatives. In some situations, reporters accompanied the units from their home station to the deployment area. Other encounters resulted from journalists traveling to the military operation to cover its progress. In all cases, military police junior leaders believed they exercised sound judgment and executed the appropriate actions. The following discussion analyzes those decisions.

Several surveys discussed MP units deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to provide assistance and security to the Cuban refugees awaiting entry into the United States. Refugees stayed in camps which provided the basic necessities. The 89th MP Brigade's mission was to ensure their safety and security. Due to the nature of the mission, the commander's media policy allowed journalists access only with military escort. Senior officers within the brigade normally accompanied visiting journalists. According to a junior officer, some interviews of Cubans led to problems. He explained that prior to his brigade's arrival, news media personnel were very intrusive. The Cubans realized that media reports of their satisfaction with camp conditions did little to help their cause. They very quickly learned that the press could assist their situation if

news accounts highlighted chaos and unrest in the camps. The Cubans believed these demonstrations would facilitate their entry into the United States. As a result, they became very agitated when reporters were in the area. Junior and senior military leaders soon learned how to keep the situation calm by preventing certain Cuban refugees from talking to the media.

One senior officer within the unit¹, noted that the policy was to allow as much access for reporters to the refugees as possible without threatening the camps' security. The commander was greatly concerned with respect to the media and specifically, to the message broadcast to the public. He briefed personnel on their responsibilities and ensured that officers escorted the correspondents while in the camps. The commander was cognizant of camp images which might attract the journalists' attention. By emplacing fencing adjacent to the concertina razor wire, the commander ensured that Cuban children did not suffer injuries. This practice also avoided concentration camp-like pictures. The commander's intent was to provide security for the refugees, not to incarcerate them in a prison facility. Given that purpose, the commander structured the MP uniform and equipment accordingly. In a drastic departure from the Marine unit who had performed this mission prior to the MP brigade's arrival, the commander did not allow MP patrols to carry weapons into the camps. Additionally, they did not wear surgical gloves for protection against a perceived threat of aids when dealing with the Cubans. Again, the intent was to portray the MP as a community servant rather than a captor to the refugees. This practice did not subject any soldiers to an increased threat of the disease. It was also an important message to send to the deployed soldiers' families that there was not a serious risk to soldiers. In this particular deployment, the commander was well aware of media images and messages, and their subsequent impact on the soldiers' and their families' morale.

According to some junior leaders, however, the specific public affairs policy was not clearly defined.² Although these individuals understood the policy to be unrestrictive, junior level

commanders imposed their own limits in dealing with the media upon soldiers. Their instructions included confining comments to facts about the camps and duties, and avoiding discussions of personal feelings about the mission. According to one officer, visiting journalists attempted to solicit soldiers' personal opinions or any comments condemning camp conditions. He also noticed that journalists took pictures of the most depressing situations. He noted that the PAO who accompanied the media kept them from "twisting reality."

Another junior leader within the brigade explained that the standard operating procedures allowed reporters access to the camps on a weekly basis. Military police leaders briefed the media on each occasion. For guidance, this particular junior leader told his soldiers to refer all press queries to the PAO, if they (the soldiers) had any doubts. He explained that the reporters normally cooperated with those requests. Stating that he did not receive any specific instruction in these skills, he strongly recommended media training for military police.

Applying the evaluation criteria discussed in the research methodology to analyze the incidents revealed the following conclusions. Not all the MP junior leaders understood the public affairs policy for the operation. Again, the lack of standardized training in media relations caused MP actions to vary according to the situation. Specifically, senior officers escorted the media representatives in the camps, presenting a very open image of the unit and soldiers. The junior level commanders, however, advised soldiers to restrict comments to camp conditions or duties and avoid personal opinions. This appeared to contrast with the brigade commander's intent. Consequently, information was not made fully available at all levels. It appeared that at the highest levels, journalists had access to information, but at the junior levels, more restrictions existed. The mission's security required the media escort policy; however, cooperation and media access to the Brigade was still possible. There is no evidence that the MPs discussed anything beyond their scope of responsibility. As discussed, the free flow of information about this mission

to the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families, without censorship and propaganda depended upon which level of leaders interacted with the media. Prior to this deployment, the military police soldiers and junior leaders received little, if any, training in media skills. In the survey responses, some mentioned the desire for media skills training.

During Uphold Democracy, the military operation in Haiti, military police junior leaders, again, had involvement with journalists. During the response to the scene of a fatal ambush, military police experienced problems physically limiting the press.³ Although they had some training, this junior leader felt the media relations could have been better. He cited subsequent newspaper stories which accused MPs of using excessive force on the journalists. The junior leader felt additional media skills training would have given his soldiers and leaders better methods and more experience in convincing journalists to cooperate.

In this particular situation, the information is limited on whether the MP knew the media policy. The significance of this incident is the desire on the part of a junior leader for more training in media relations. He noted the resulting press from his soldiers' actions was unfavorable and possibly, additional training would have altered those news accounts. It also identified a familiar scenario for military police to respond to a crisis and immediately be faced with establishing site security, to include removing journalists from the immediate vicinity.

Another unit enroute to Haiti brought a reporter from its local civilian newspaper to cover the unit's missions. The 16th Military Police Brigade from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, deployed as part of the first U.S. military elements into Haiti. The Brigade Commander, Colonel Michael Sullivan explained his initial inclination about the press relations issue. He stated that he provided limited guidance to his soldiers. Essentially, he told them that the media presence would be high, and "to be nice, don't compromise the mission, and be professional."⁴ He also stated that his preference was not to allow journalists to accompany his unit. The corps commander's guidance,

however, changed the situation. Sullivan explained that he followed the commander's direction and granted full access to the reporter, to include personally briefing him on the operations plan.

Sullivan felt this was a success because the journalist could more accurately report on missions when he understood the unit's objectives, methods, and standard operating procedures. On the issue of media presence during military engagements, Sullivan predicted this scenario for future operations.

The press is going to be there. They are going to report something. They can either report the truth as it is or as they know it or they believe it to be. I think we are in a much stronger position if we give them the opportunity to report what is actually happening based on some knowledge on their part of what was supposed to happen.⁵

The 16th MP Brigade adjutant acted as a PAO and worked with the media. Journalists traveled with MPs as they performed mobile patrolling. On one occasion, a reporter with the unit and who had been granted total access by the senior commander requested to accompany a routine patrol. The company commander disapproved the request even though it violated the higher headquarters public affairs policy. The junior commander was not familiar with the reporter or the brigade's procedures with respect to the media. The company commander gave no explanation to the reporter of why he disapproved the request. In this situation, the journalist was unable to inform the public or the soldiers' families adequately about the unit's activities.

In this particular incident, the junior leader did not know the commander's public affairs policy. His actions prevented the journalist from accompanying a routine patrol and thus, contradicted the stated command policy. The junior leader's actions prohibited the release of information concerning that patrol's activities. Although he did not release information beyond his scope of responsibility, he still failed to adhere to the principle of disclosing the maximum amount of information possible without compromising mission security. The brigade commander had already determined that the reporter's presence with the patrol did not jeopardize the operations

security. As stated by the brigade commander, the military police junior leader had no formal media skills instruction prior to deployment due to the many other training requirements of the mission. It is unknown what impact this had on the media policy or mission. Despite this incident, overall, the unit's activities with the media representatives resulted in favorable accounting of the brigade's mission and soldiers. The senior commander's direct input to the public affairs policy and practices were key to the open flow of information to the American audience at home. Sullivan summed up his media experiences with a resounding endorsement of journalists accompanying soldiers and units as they support Army commitments.

I am a believer that the way we did it in Haiti is the way we ought to do it each and every time. It gives the American people true representation of what's going on. They're going to read it in the paper and they're going to believe what they see. And, if you've got reporters there, who are on the ground early on and know what the plan is, and can watch it being executed, they can write from a much more informed perspective. [Then], you're going to get much more balance and I think that's what anybody wants—a balanced story.⁶

During the deployment of Intrinsic Action 94-1 in Kuwait, the media requested permission to be present during the departure and arrival of the soldiers. Public affairs officers were on site and assisted MP leaders with the question and answer period.⁷

On this occasion, MP leaders knew the public affairs policy, and their actions were consistent with the policy. The PAO's presence provided trained personnel with media experience and enabled the free flow of information to the soldiers and family members within the command. It is unknown what media skills training was available to the unit, or what training the unit requested.

Prior to Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti, a MP sergeant was performing law enforcement duties at Fort Lewis, Washington.⁸ The Ranger Battalion had just deployed, and this information was not public knowledge for security reasons. The local television station sent a broadcast crew to conduct a remote live broadcast from the installation's front gate. Behind the

gate, military police soldiers routinely manned an information booth. A PAO representative, watching the evening news, noticed an MP sergeant place himself between the camera and reporter during the broadcast. It appeared that the MP intended to disrupt the filming. The PAO immediately notified the information booth personnel to tell the MP to move away from the newscasters. The film crew was conducting the remote broadcast in anticipation of Fort Lewis soldiers deploying to Haiti. When questioned, the MP sergeant felt he was preventing the release of classified information. The provost marshal and public affairs officer agreed the MP's actions were not justified.

This particular MP was not familiar with the public affairs policy. His actions directly reflected an inexperience with the media. He was unaware of their methods of obtaining file footage or conducting remote broadcasts. As a direct result of his actions, this local station could not conduct its television program on the scene. They were also unable to film scenes of the post for use in later telecasts. In other words, the MP directly and intentionally prevented the release of information to the media. Despite the MP's personal feeling that the media operation was creating a security risk, there was not a problem with the journalists filming the installation's front gate or information booth. Prior to this incident, this particular junior leader had not received media skills training. The MP's actions caused the provost marshal and PAO to respond to complaints from executives at the local television station.

During a deployment of soldiers to Germany, possibility enroute to Bosnia, the installation PAO and local commanders invited journalists to a farewell ceremony. The media asked to talk to soldiers. The commander granted the reporters' request. At one point, a journalist approached a young MP to interview him. The soldier's company commander intervened and informed the journalist this particular soldier was not available for comment. The officer provided no

explanation to the journalist or to others who witnessed the account. The journalist subsequently found other soldiers to interview.⁹

The company commander was not familiar with the public affairs policy or the senior commander's intent for inviting media to the ceremony. The junior leader violated the media policy by denying media access to that soldier. He indicated that the soldier was unhappy about the deployment, and therefore, was worried about the soldier's comments to the press. Consequently, there was not a free flow of information. The soldier did not pose a security risk concerning information to be released. The commander denied access solely to prevent publication of the soldier's potentially unfavorable remarks, a clear violation of the dod Principles of Information. In this situation, the MP junior leader did not speak above his level of authority, but he did prevent information concerning this soldier from being made available to others in the command or to the soldier's family members. It is unknown if the company commander had any specific media skills training. The impact of the commander's actions was limited because the reporter was able to interview another deploying soldier.

In Somalia, a young MP lieutenant was leading a convoy which included soldiers from other nations. As the senior person, he was in charge of the convoy escort mission. A reporter from the Wall Street Journal accompanied the unit. During a routine convoy stop, the lieutenant engaged in a conversation with others on the mission. Apparently, he made some derogatory comments about the Italian troops involved in the convoy escort. The comments appeared in the national publication. Upon later questioning, the lieutenant insisted he did not talk directly to the reporter. According to a senior MP officer, the lieutenant related that he expressed his opinion to a group of soldiers. He also noted that the reporter may have heard his remarks.¹⁰

It is unknown whether the lieutenant was familiar with the specific public affairs policy for that operation. His actions did violate common sense and military custom by openly commenting

about another nation's soldiers in a combined operation. He spoke beyond his level of authority by publicly addressing his personal perceptions of soldiers not under his command. The final impact of his actions is unknown. At a minimum, his actions reflected a gross misunderstanding of the power of the press and their ability to pass information to many audiences. Media relations training programs highlight these news media capabilities. They can also alert soldiers and leaders to potential problems concerning remarks that may initially seem insignificant and offer ways to avoid such situations. Needless to say, this particular event did not result in a favorable impression of this lieutenant with personnel who learned of his remarks.

Another series of incidents between the media and military police junior leaders occurred during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in Southwest Asia. Throughout December 1990 and the first two months of 1991, military police operated checkpoints along the main supply route, Tapline Road, in Saudi Arabia. The checkpoints monitored military convoys and ensured the safe and secure transportation of supplies, equipment and personnel into the western area of the theater.

At this time, VII Corps units moved in preparation for a western flanking movement of the Iraqi army.¹¹ Military police were familiar with the number and unit designations of vehicles heading west due to the vehicles' bumper markings. Because of their mission to maintain the checkpoints 24 hours per day, military police located their tents and other equipment adjacent to the roadway. This proximity to the main traffic route afforded an extensive opportunity for media representatives to talk with these soldiers and junior leaders.

According to the journalists, they obtained information from these MP checkpoints about VII Corps units, their direction of travel, and other information concerning upcoming operations. The journalists were not actively videotaping or interviewing the soldiers and leaders. Rather, the reporters engaged in casual conversation. The journalists relayed this information to the VII Corps

PAO. Although the journalists saw the vehicle movements themselves, they were unfamiliar with unit bumper identifications. The military police did not realize the journalists' lack of understanding about the vehicle markings. These particular military police did not specifically train in media skills prior to their duties at the checkpoints.

The 14th MP Brigade had requested media training, but only for those soldiers and leaders handling the VII Corps enemy prisoner of war (EPW) cage. The commander specifically requested and received media skills training for that unit due to their mission of securing the EPW. This company, however, was a small section of the brigade, and not the only unit to encounter media or EPW processing. As a side note, the media did not request interviews or seek much information from the VII Corps EPW site. Other sites, those at the theater level, held more prisoners, and for an extended period of time. The media sought opportunities at the larger camps to compile stories about enemy prisoners.

During these checkpoint incidents, military police soldiers were not familiar with the public affairs policy. Their inappropriate actions demonstrated a significant training deficiency and lack of familiarity with the current media environment. Although, the soldiers were not talking "on the record," their casual conversations provided sensitive and classified information to the journalists. The reporters subsequently told the corps PAO about the information the military police provided. The PAO instructed journalists on the information's sensitivity which minimized the impact and avoided an early release. These military police soldiers and leaders had not received media skills training prior to their employment at the checkpoints. The overall impact of the military police actions is unknown, but the PAO's action probably reduced the severity or further compromise of the information.

During this same time period in Germany, another military police unit performed a security mission at a helicopter crash site. The PAO at scene anticipated a significant number of

journalists arriving in the area very quickly. The helicopter had carried a deputy corps commander and several key staff officers. He queried the MP on the scene about the precise number of casualties. He asked to see the bodies to ensure he released an accurate number to the media. The MP sergeant escorted him to the other side of the aircraft and pointed out the remains. The PAO explained the procedures for the press' arrival and the pictures to allow them to take. The pictures did not allow for any recognition of the victims. According to the PAO, within thirty minutes, the press arrived. As a result of his meeting with the PAO, the MP was adequately informed on how to handle the media at the scene.

In this particular situation, it was unknown if the MP was familiar with the public affairs policy prior to the arrival of the PAO. He clearly recognized the role of the PAO and cooperated fully. The MP's actions allowed for the free flow of information. There was no evidence that the MP spoke above his level of responsibility. It is unknown if he had previous public affairs training beyond the guidance from the PAO.

In another aircraft incident in Germany, the MP on the scene reacted differently. A helicopter conducted a forced landing to complete some repairs. Military police cordoned off the area, and within a few minutes, some media representatives arrived. As they attempted to take pictures of the aircraft while it was on the ground, the military police confiscated the photographer's film. According to the PAO, the MP did not explain his actions nor were his actions authorized. The incident starkly contrasted with the previous one and indicated a lack of common training in this arena for military police soldiers and leaders. As his actions indicate, the second MP was unfamiliar with the PA policy. His inappropriate conduct prevented the free flow of information and was not justified for security reasons.

According to the PAO, this was not the only case of military police erroneously confiscating film. A German civilian took pictures of the front gate of an American housing area

in Frankfurt, Germany. An MP approached him, advised him that he could not take pictures, and demanded the film. There were no signs prohibiting picture taking, and the MP did not have the authority to unilaterally take the film. Fortunately, the MP did not destroy the film, but secured it in the guard shack. When this German civilian, a representative in the Hessian state parliament called the PAO and asked if he could have those particular pictures on the film of his daughter's wedding, the PAO was able to locate the film and return it. According to the PAO, the MP in that incident did not understand the impact of his actions or the status of that particular citizen. While it is true that the standing of this citizen did not demand any special treatment by the MP, this situation does merit evaluation. It does highlight the fact that military police encounter many individuals who may not readily identify themselves. These personnel may include journalists or others seeking information who possess an ability to publicize the MP's inappropriate actions. The significance of this case is the necessity for military police to assume every incident may result in publicity and therefore, tailor their behavior accordingly.

Several years ago, military police soldiers at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, dealt with media in the aftermath of the aircraft crash at Gander, New Foundland.¹² Due to significant press involvement, the commander directed military personnel to escort all journalists on the installation. Military police provided security to the installation PAO and assisted in enforcing the media escort policy. Essentially, military police patrols who identified unescorted media notified the PAO and subsequently, escorted the journalists to the gate. Military police presence at the public affairs office signaled the command's commitment to a cooperative, but controlled operation. The MPs were helpful, courteous, and polite, but also firm and well versed in appropriate responses. These junior leaders and soldiers served as the first line of contact with the media.

Throughout the duration of the media escort policy, military police leaders and soldiers on Fort Campbell were knowledgeable concerning the media policy and specifically, their particular

role in its success. Military police actions were appropriate and in accordance with the commander's policy. There was no evidence that the soldiers and leaders provided information beyond their level of responsibility or violated the commander's intent to cooperate with the media. The installation commander and public affairs officer were satisfied with the military police performance of duty. This particular situation offered a familiar mission of providing site security and enforcing installation policies on civilian visitors to the installation.

The cited military police incidents with the media representatives in this chapter are not tremendous successes or failures. Rather, they range from complete cooperation with the media and a thorough understanding of their authority to significant shortfalls in performing within the pertinent commander's public affairs policy. The more significant failures included disrupting broadcast operations and publicly insulting foreign soldiers during combined military operations. (See Appendix D for a summary of incidents.) Some incidents were successful and represented a desire to cooperate with the news media and abide by Defense Department directives. Clearly, the senior commanders cited were attuned to the sensitivity of dealing with the press and attempted to brief soldiers on the ramifications of inappropriate actions. However, given the myriad of required training tasks prior to deployment, commanders were unable to prepare soldiers and junior leaders fully, and on some occasions, even minimally, to survive in a media-populated environment.

Most of the cited incidents with less than favorable outcomes reflected a lack of military police training and experience with news media personnel. Any training conducted for units prior to deployment was based on commander's requests and not a standardized program for military police junior leaders and soldiers. Due to the nature of garrison operations, there was no pre-deployment training period. Unless scheduled as part of routine training, military police performing garrison law enforcement operations did not receive media skills training prior to encountering journalists in a crisis situation. It is interesting to note that military police soldiers

are trained on individual rights, but not on the specific Constitutional issues involving journalists and the military's legal requirements to cooperate with them.

Another disadvantage of limited media training is the lack of coverage of military police operations. The ability of soldiers and family members to learn about the unit's activities via the media significantly impacts upon their morale and welfare. Soldiers want to tell the story of their accomplishments, and family members yearn for any information about the deployment. There is also the inherent duty to inform the American public about the military's activities and operations. This obligation has grown more critical that ever with the development of the media's global communications capability. Both national and international media are adept at finding and reporting on military operations, including instantaneous on-site broadcasts for their audiences. News media executives demand extensive coverage from their reporters, who in turn, will seek cooperation from military sources. The key concept is that media will be there, at times, even ahead of the deploying force. Senior leaders recognize this inevitability. They must recognize the need train junior leaders to deal with this environment.

¹ Lt. Colonel Daniel C. Watkins, interviewed by author, Nov. 1995, via telephone from Fort Leavenworth, KS. All references to the Brigade Commander, his decisions, and his actions came from this interview. Lt. Colonel Watkins was the Brigade Executive Officer at the time of the unit's deployment.

² Information was provided by junior officers who completed surveys sent to the unit.

³ Information was provided by a junior officer who completed survey sent to the unit.

⁴ Colonel Michael Sullivan, interviewed by Major Damien Carr, via telephone, 7 Feb 1996.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Information was provided by junior officers who completed surveys sent to their unit.

⁸ Information was provided by the PAO representative on the scene.

⁹ Information was provided by the PAO representative on the scene.

¹⁰ Information was provided by a senior MP officer in Somalia at that time.

¹¹ Information was provided by the VII Corps PAO during Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

¹² Information was provided by the 101st Air Assault Division Public Affairs Officer at the time of the incident.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter answers the research question: Are military police junior leaders sufficiently trained in media skills to successfully perform their duties? Involved in a wide variety of missions, military police soldiers and leaders must be proficient in numerous tasks. Simply stated, military police, like all Army personnel, need to be able to shoot, move, and communicate. This thesis addressed the last function. It also expanded the doctrinal definition of that task, to include communicating with the American public via the media.

The answer to the research question is no. In many incidents identified during this examination, military police junior leaders did contribute to their units' operational success. In terms of public affairs policy or media relations, however, a majority did not comply with their commander's intent. More significantly, they failed to satisfy the Department of Defense principles concerning communications with news media representatives. Specifically, they did not provide the maximum disclosure of information possible within operational constraints. These junior leaders were not familiar with the legal requirements for cooperation with journalists nor the press' customary techniques for gathering information. In some cases, military police did not provide enough data to reporters, while in others, the soldiers did release sensitive information to the media. Some junior leaders also described feeling uncomfortable in their dealings with the media. Normally, this type of uneasiness decreases dramatically with additional training and experience.

Throughout the research, it was apparent that military police senior leaders were aware of requirements for interacting with the press. They also demonstrated an understanding of the implications of not cooperating with the media or not being prepared to deal with press representatives. Some of the measures these commanders undertook to brief the media about their operations were noteworthy. Unfortunately, their military police junior leaders did not share this same perspective. Their lack of understanding and technical competence in media relations skills became significant deficiencies for them and their units.

The research also indicated that no standardized training program exists for military police soldiers and leaders to acquire the necessary skills to deal with journalists. Unit training programs for both deployable and garrison organizations did not normally include media relations skills. The professional development courses at the U.S. Army Military Police School did not include this type of training within the programs of instruction for junior leaders.¹ When units were notified for deployment, time became a critical shortage. Commanders cited too many requirements to fit into a limited schedule. On those occasions, media skills were not a high enough priority to warrant expending valuable training time.

It should be noted that not all incidents from this research reflected inappropriate action by military police junior leaders. Some personnel clearly demonstrated a desire to cooperate with news media in accordance with their command's established policy. Others at least recognized the PAOs as assets to assist in this area and used them accordingly. The research also revealed that many of the junior leaders recognized their shortfall in media relations and requested more training to avoid similar problems in the future.

This research also identified other disadvantages resulting from insufficient cooperation with journalists. Units and personnel inexperienced in the ways of the press missed opportunities to highlight accomplishments. The American public, and in particular, the soldiers' families did

not learn of the units' contributions through local or national publications. Additionally, reporters who did meet those organizations did not fully appreciate or understand their operations. These reporters did not accompany the soldiers for the duration of their missions nor did they receive briefings on operational plans. Consequently, their weak knowledge base about the military effort hampered their media coverage.

In analyzing these situations, it was noted that the MP junior leader's actions were generally not so extreme as to cause the mission's failure. In most cases, the junior leaders believed their actions reflected sound judgment. Given the requirements of the Department of Defense Principles of Information, however, they clearly did not meet the standards.

The lack of formal media skills training was the significant factor producing these press relations failures. Today's media-rich environment demands soldiers and leaders be well-versed in press relations to professionally survive. Recent events highlighted in previous chapters offer specific examples of senior personnel learning this lesson the difficult way. As discussed, some units did not have to time prior to deployment to conduct media training. Other units targeted only a small number of soldiers and leaders to receive such preparation. Clearly, in the case of garrison law enforcement agencies, the nature of the mission did not provide a predeployment time frame for the education of personnel in media skills.

The research also indicated that the senior commander within the unit appeared to be the driving force for determining if unit personnel received this type of training. Without a standardized program of instruction in the professional development courses, the commander's personal commitment or lack thereof in this area was even more critical.

In the military police successes with press representatives, the soldiers and leaders trained in media relations prior to the incidents. Some training may have been brief and just prior to the situation, but it did fulfill the void. Selected units conducted predeployment training which

included preparing individuals to work with the media. Other units incorporated those tasks as part of routine training.

Lessons learned from soldiers and leaders' exposure to media skills training were evident in the deployment of Fort Polk's MP company. The unit had the advantage of being located on the same installation as the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC). Recognizing the criticality of media relations skills, the Department of the Army had directed JRTC to include news media role players and to evaluate units' abilities to accomplish missions while encountering media within their area of operation. The Fort Polk MP company used the opportunity offered by JRTC's media relations section to enhance its soldiers and leaders' skills. The resulting positive news accounts of the unit's activities demonstrated the advantages of the training.

The inconsistency of military police junior leaders' actions throughout the incidents indicated a systemic deficiency that cannot be overcome with just unit training. This pervasive problem can only be solved by a dedicated, command-directed, and consistent educational process within the military police professional development programs. The US Army Military Police School has the opportunity to conduct such training for its junior noncommissioned, warrant, and commissioned officers. The basic and advanced courses for all military police leaders should conduct initial media relations training. A basic knowledge of the media's role in our democracy, the military's requirement to keep the American public informed, and the advantages of open communication via the media are essential areas for schooling. The abilities of participating in an interview, determining the type of information appropriate for release to the media, and coordinating with the Public Affairs Officer are also integral components of sufficient introductory level education.

This thesis focused on military police junior leader interactions with members of the media. The conclusions, however, can apply to leaders and soldiers of any military occupation.

With some exceptions, many of today's soldiers can find themselves in situations encountering the press similar to the ones in this research. As members of the military, they, too, must adhere to the DOD principles of information. Given the increased deployment of many different types of Army units and the propensity of the press to be present in the operational area, media skills training should be a must for all leaders and soldiers.

General Dennis J. Reimer, the Army Chief of Staff recently acknowledged the shortfall of media skills among senior uniformed personnel after several highly publicized events.

I don't think we do a very good job of training our senior officers to deal with the media. That's a hit on us, and it's a fair hit. I think we've got to do a little bit better. We're working on trying to figure out how we can do that.²

Given this opinion from the highest ranking Army officer, how can senior commanders consider that junior leaders are adequately trained to handle similar situations? Journalists readily admit targeting military members of all ranks in order to obtain news. Past military operations have demonstrated that reporters will travel to locations where military operations are being conducted, despite the most austere and hazardous conditions. With military deployments continuing at a record pace, media encounters should be expected.

Finally, as with any identified skill deficiency, training is the answer. In this particular area, the professional development courses are key to the individual soldier's confidence and success in confronting this challenge. Ultimately, unit accomplishments will result from these individual successes. It is up to leaders at all levels to ensure their subordinates are adequately trained in crucial skills. In today's environment, communication has become not only a critical tool, but a professional survival skill.

¹ This information was from a review of current programs of instruction for basic and advanced officer, warrant officer, and noncommissioned officer professional development courses at the U.S. Army Military Police School, Fort McClellan, Alabama. It should be noted that during the same time as this research effort, senior officials at the MP school have directed some media skills training for junior officers.

² General Dennis J. Reimer, interviewed by editors of the Army Times, Nov. 21, 1995. Excerpts from this interview appeared in the Dec. 4, 1995 issue of Army Times.

APPENDIX A

DOD PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION

A. Timely and accurate information will be made available so that the public, Congress, and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security, defense strategy, and on-going joint and unilateral operations.

B. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens will be answered in a timely manner. In carrying out this policy, the following principles of information apply:

(1) Information will be made fully available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by current and valid security classification. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act will be complied with in both letter and spirit.

(2) A free flow of general and military information will be made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the Armed Forces and their family members.

(3) Information will not be classified or otherwise withheld to protect the government from criticism or embarrassment.

(4) Information will be withheld only when disclosure would adversely affect national and operations security or threaten the safety or privacy of the men and women of the Armed Forces.

(5) The Department's obligation to provide the public with information on its major programs and operations may require detailed public affairs planning and coordination within the Department and with other government agencies. The sole purpose of such activity is to expedite the flow of information to the public; propaganda or publicity designed to sway or direct public opinion will not be included in Department of Defense public affairs programs.

Source: FM 46-1, Public Affairs Operations, (Coordinating Draft), 15 November 1994, 53-4.

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir,

I am currently a CGSC student working on a Master of Military Arts and Sciences Degree and would appreciate your assistance. My topic concerns the level of training for Military Police in the dealing with media representatives during military operations.

Specifically, I am interested in any examples of MP junior leaders, (SGT, SSG, LT, or CPT) who have dealt with the media. I am requesting answers to the following:

- (1) What was the public affairs policy during the situation/deployment?
- (2) What was the specific MP and media incident, including general situation?
- (3) What were the MP's actions?
- (4) Did you consider this media incident successful? (why or why not)
- (5) What were the lessons learned? Were changes mandated? Was PA or media training developed as a result?

I am also interested in any general comments concerning your dealings with the media, required training in media skills for MP, or the probability of MP interaction with media representatives. I am researching lessons learned and soliciting input from USAMPS, the Public Affairs Proponency branch, and OSD, Public Affairs. However, I feel a significant amount of information may come from unit and participant inquiries.

I thank you for your time in this matter. I sincerely hope to provide some worthwhile input to the MP school regarding the training in media skills for MP soldiers.

MaryAnn B. Cummings
MAJ, MP
CGSC, Section 24 D

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MILITARY

1. During your years of working with Military Police, do you have any specific incidents of MP junior leaders interacting with the media? (MP junior leaders are SGT, SSG, WO1, CW2, LT and CPT; Media includes any representatives of local, national, foreign press, television, and radio)

(Consider deployments, garrison support, special operations, contingency missions)

2. Were the incidents successful? Why or why not?
3. How do you define a successful media interaction?
4. What training in media skills did your units/MP have prior to incident?
5. What were the results of the media interaction?
6. Were any policies changed as a result of the media interaction?
7. Was training in media skills initiated/increased/decreased?
8. What do you consider important for MP junior leaders to know about dealing with members of the media?
9. What recommendations for training of MP in this area?
10. Should BNCOC, ANCOC, OBC, OAC, WOAC include training in this area?
11. Should units incorporate this training into training plans?
12. Should media skills training be limited to just prior to deployment?
13. Do you have any other recommendations which may assist my research?

APPENDIX C (cont)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR JOURNALISTS

1. How have you developed strong relationships with senior military leaders and gained almost unprecedented access to military operations and information?
2. What would you tell junior journalists trying to achieve a similar relationship with military leaders?
3. Do you have specific incidents involving military police soldiers? What were the details, and did they interfere with your reporting?
4. What recommendations do you have for junior soldiers who deal with the media? For MP who deal with the media?
5. What is your opinion of the military PAO training soldiers in media relations skills---talking with the media?
6. What are your ideas on military-imposed ground rules?
7. Do you think the media will police itself on issues of information security in lieu of ground rules?
8. Considering the first amendment, does the media have the right of access to military operations? (in book, asked for permission to enter unit AO) Should the media be allowed to roam the battlefield?
9. What is your impression of the utility of media pools? (Pools refer to the grouping of reporters and sharing information gained)
10. What do you consider the obligations of the media?

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

The following table summarizes the military police junior leaders incidents with news media according to the DOD Principles of Information. Some incident reports did not address all questions. Affirmative answers to the following evaluation questions are consistent with the DOD principles.

Total number of incidents: 13

Number of incidents when MP were aware of PA policy:

Yes-3; No-9; Input not available-1

Number of incidents when MP's actions were consistent with the PA policy:

Yes-3; No-9; Input not available-1

Number of incidents when MP provided free flow of information to media:

Yes-3; No-7; Input not available-3

Number of incidents when MP did not discuss information above level of responsibility:

Yes-4; No-2; Input not available-7

Number of incidents when MP did not provide information not authorized for release:

Yes-9; No-2; Input not available-2

Number of incidents when MP received media skills training:

Yes- 3; No-6; Input not available-4

Number of incidents when MP requested/wanted more media skills training:

Yes-4; No-0; Input not available-9

APPENDIX E

DARCY STUDY SURVEY RESULTS

The following information identifies some questions and responses of a survey developed and compiled for a thesis written by Major Paul Ambrose Darcy, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1993. Respondents were directed to select one answer for each question.

QUESTION: At what level of military schooling did you receive training on the media?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Total N</u>	<u>Percent of Population</u>
Officer Basic Course	6	2.38
Officer Advanced Course	17	6.75
Combined Arms and Services Staff School	25	9.92
Command and General Staff College	136	53.97
None of the above	53	21.03
Error	15	5.95

QUESTION: At what level of military schooling do you feel there should be training on the media?

<u>Response</u>	<u>Total N</u>	<u>Percent of Population</u>
Officer Basic Course	35	13.89
Officer Advanced Course	44	17.46
Combined Arms and Services Staff School	16	6.35
Command and General Staff College	22	8.73
All of the above	127	50.40
Error	8	3.17

APPENDIX E (cont)

DARCY STUDY

The Demographic summary of the respondents is as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Total N</u>	<u>Percent of Population</u>
Combat Arms	139	55.16
Combat Support	50	19.84
Combat Service		
Support	53	21.03
Non-OPM	9	3.57
Error	1	0.40

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Total N</u>	<u>Percent of Population</u>
Male	224	88.9
Female	28	11.10

APPENDIX F

FREEDOM FORUM SURVEY SUMMARY

1. The news media are just as necessary to maintaining US freedom as the military.
Military agreeing 82% News media agreeing 98%
2. Reporting should be free of censorship, but in accordance with published guidelines.
Military agreeing 55% News media agreeing 76%
3. News media should report anything they decide, with no restrictions whatsoever.
Military agreeing 2% News media agreeing 18%
4. Military leaders should be allowed to use the news media to deceive the enemy (thereby deceiving the American public).
Military agreeing 60% News media agreeing 8%
5. News media more interested in negative stories of wrongdoing/scandals than positive stories of victories/efficient operation.
Military agreeing 82% News media agreeing 47%
6. The military often wastes taxpayer money on unnecessary weapons.
Military agreeing 27% News media agreeing 76%
7. News media more interested in increasing readership/viewership than in telling public what it needs to know.
Military agreeing 91% News media agreeing 30%
8. News media more interested in personal power than in what is good for the country.
Military agreeing 65% News media agreeing 17%
9. News media coverage of events in Vietnam harmed the war effort.
Military agreeing 64% News media agreeing 17%
10. Few members of the media are knowledgeable about national defense.
Military agreeing 70% News media agreeing 74%
11. Military personnel are honest when dealing with the news media.
Military agreeing 84% News media agreeing 43%
12. News media personnel should be free to visit any place they choose within the war zone.
Military agreeing 10% News media agreeing 73%

APPENDIX F (cont.)

FREEDOM FORUM SURVEY SUMMARY

13. News media should be free to visit only those places approved by the military.
Military agreeing 55% News media agreeing 23%
14. The news media are mainly left-wing doves who never want the nation to enter combat.
Military agreeing 24% News media agreeing 9%
15. Military personnel are mainly right-wing hawks itching to get into combat.
Military agreeing 3% News media agreeing 5%
16. Would you publish a photograph of airplanes taking off, possibly indicating a secret invasion by US forces?
Military: yes 13% no 74% News media: yes 35% no 24%
17. Would you publish evidence that the married commander of a local military base is having an affair with the well-known operator of a restaurant?
Military: yes 52% no 32% News media: yes 10% no 69%
18. Would you publish evidence that the cadet commander of the ROTC unit at the local university is gay but keeps his or her sexual orientation private?
Military: yes 25% no 61% News media: yes 6% no 81%
19. Would you publish a battlefield photograph of US troop casualties, including fatalities, ignoring requests of a public affairs officer that the photo not be used so as not to lower public and troop morale?
Military: yes 49% no 31% News media: yes 82% no 5%

Demographics of the survey respondents

Numbers of military responses

by service: Army (350), Navy (280), Marines (72), Air Force (205), Coast Guard (20)
by rank: O-4 & below (144), O-5 (258), O-6 (88), O-7 (205), O-8 (163), O-9 (45), O-10 (11)

Numbers of media responses

by medium: newspapers (96), television (24), magazines (10), radio (9), other (5)
by job category: Editorial executives (84), Reporters or correspondents (53),
Operations/financial executives (4)

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